

Mexican Life

Mexico's Monthly Review

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By Manuel Pastrana





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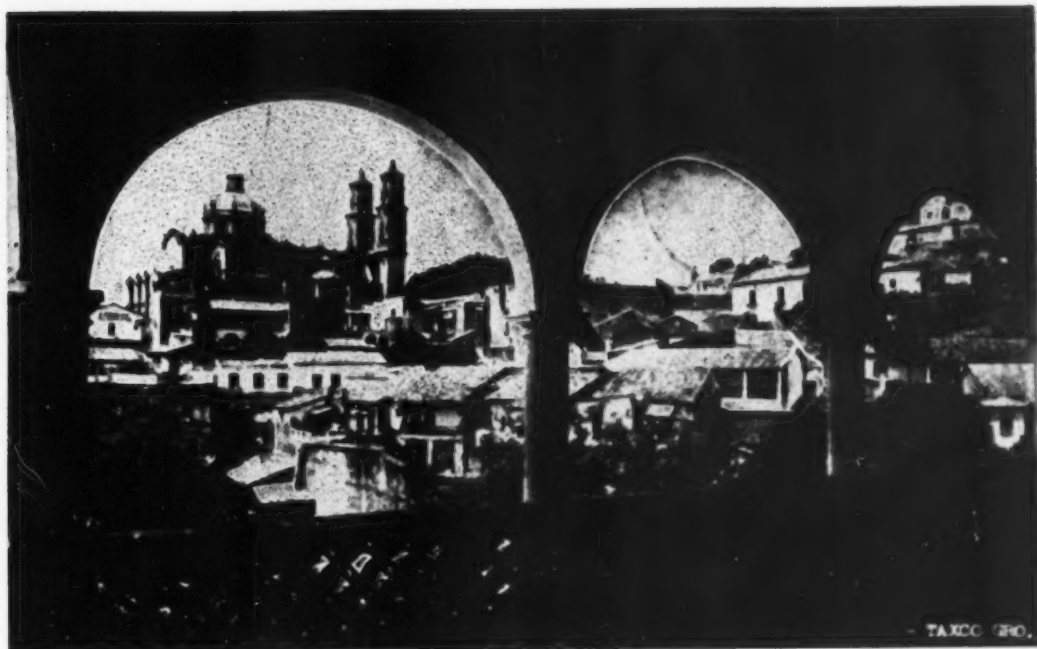
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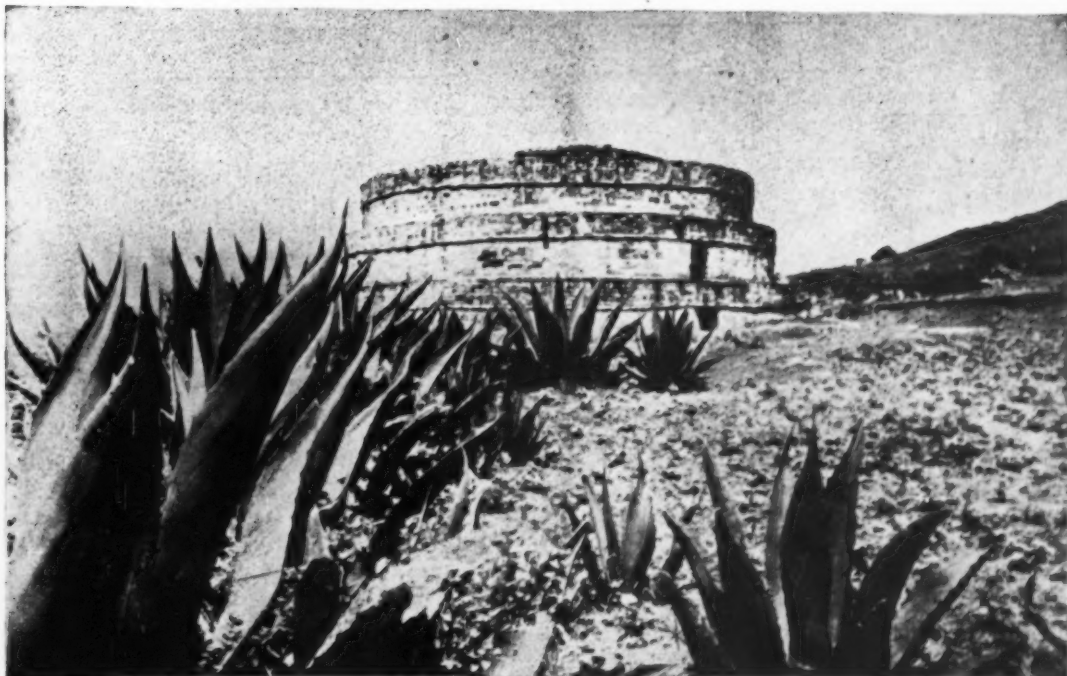
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HOWARD S. PHILLIPS

EDITOR

The Problem of Migratory Labor

SINCE the end of World War II, as a direct result of inflation and the sharp devaluation of the peso in its exchange value against the dollar, Mexico has been confronting a very serious problem of a constantly increasing drain of man-power through the illegal migration of native workmen to the United States. This migration has of late reached such overwhelming proportions as to create an international dilemma for which neither the government of Mexico or the United States seems to have a feasible solution.

In order to provide a legal basis and to restrict this migration, an agreement exists between the two governments for a specific annual quota of temporary immigrants. But the number of aspirantes who are determined to cross the border so greatly exceeds this fixed quota as to annul its practical value. The Mexican government has no legal means whereby to deter this migration, while the United States Immigration Service cannot effectively guard against this mass incursion the 1,600 mile boundary between Brownsville, Texas and San Diego, California. Patrol officers of this Service detain the so-called "wetbacks" whenever it is possible, and amiably deport them across the border. On the other hand, it is generally conceded that for every man detained, one or more penetrate the thinly patrolled boundary area undetected.

A record total of 87,416 deportations, or an average of more than two a minute, was reached during April of this year, bringing up the grand total since 1945 to somewhere around three million, or to more than ten percent of Mexico's entire population. Though we have no exact data regarding the number of those who have illegally crossed the border and remained in the United States, it would be safe to assume that the figure most likely equals that of the deportations. While a probable majority of the illegal entrants, pursuing seasonal farm work, have eventually filtered back across the border, many thousands of others have settled in the United States, thereby representing a permanent loss of productive population for Mexico.

This mass exodus is motivated by purely economic reasons. An unskilled laborer in Mexico earns about six pesos a day. Just across the border, in Texas or California, he can earn at least six dollars, which at the present rate of exchange is nearly fifty-two pesos, or almost ten times as much. The possibility of such lucrative earnings, of accumulating within a few months a fortune that could not be gathered here in a lifetime, exerts a lure which is indeed hard to resist. The average Mexican of the peasant class is deeply attached to the place of his birth and is sedentary by nature. But, with the growth of popular enlightenment and the expansion in the means of communication, he is emerging from his age-long iso-

lation and shedding his traditional "wantlessness." Like any normal human being he is impelled by an urge to achieve a better life.

Hence, so long as economic conditions throughout rural Mexico remain as they are, and work for unskilled labor is abundant in the United States, the problem of mass migration cannot be easily solved. It is a problem of poverty being attracted by wealth, of a poor country being the neighbor of one which is extremely rich.

It is obvious that the United States, apparently in need of unskilled labor, materially gains through this migration, illegal though it is; while for Mexico it signifies an undeniable loss. It is the loss of native man-power, the loss of productive effort which Mexico, striving to enlarge its economy by expanding its agriculture and industry, can ill afford. There is no unemployment problem in this country. Every man who is willing to work can find a job of some sort. The problem is simply that of low compensation, of wages that are meager at best because of the extremely low purchasing value of Mexican money.

Price inflation, which has reduced the buying strength of the peso to an approximate fifth of what it was ten years ago, and which, regardless of individual earnings, has impoverished the bulk of the population, is, on the other hand the result of chronic scarcity, of a demand that exceeds the supply. And it is only through greater productivity, through more ample human effort, that this scarcity can be replaced by abundance. Therein is the veritable essence of the problem. Mexico sorely needs its man-power in order to develop its latent wealth, to enlarge its economy, to elevate the low material standards of its population, to, in other words, create the conditions that will in the end eliminate the cause of immigration.

However, while in this respect Mexico's loss is undeniable, to look at the problem optimistically, it also represents a certain element of gain. For it is true that a considerable share of the money earned by Mexican workmen in the United States is sent back to their relatives in this country, which helps to bolster Mexico's dollar reserve, and it is also true that among those workmen who eventually return to Mexico there are many who bring back with them savings in cash which enable them to settle on a little plot of land or launch some minor enterprise. In every case they return equipped with valuable experience, some times with acquired skills or training, or higher norms of efficiency, which help them to improve their life on native ground.

Hence, in a cultural sense, such migration is not without its benefits. It is in the immediate aspects of Mexico's grave economic problem, the problem of under-production, that it defines nevertheless an incalculable loss.

Nurse Marta

By Sylvia Martin

MARTA MORENO REYES told me that a nurse had been killed only a month before. "She went into a house where there was a mother and a father and a baby. She asked to vaccinate the baby. The mother said yes, the father said no. So she made the vaccination. She put her things into her bag, thanked them, and made to leave. The father took out his gun and shot her dead."

"Why, it might happen to you!" I cried.

"Oh yes," said Marta happily.

By what bright alchemy is fact transformed into legend? In following up Marta's story I discovered it was true that Nurse Lucía Salcedo Alvarez had been killed in Sinaloa, but not as Marta had described. Walking through the streets, she had been caught in the crossfire of a gang of thieves being pursued by the police. It is a long time since nurses or doctors of the national health program have died by violence in the line of their duty. But I shall not disillusion Marta. Her work is not entirely without danger, and perhaps a sense of drama helps to make her the good nurse she is.

Marta is one of an army of seven thousand trained nurses, doctors and technicians who are struggling against hostility and superstition to make Mexico healthy.

The nation-wide program is still young. It dates from 1936, when my old friend Dr. Pilár Hernández Lira was authorized by the federal Health Department to create the Public Health Center of Cuernavaca as an experiment. With funds from the state, the federal government, and the Rockefeller Foundation, Dr. Lira converted an old Spanish colonial palace into modern clinics for pre-and post-natal care,

dental hygiene, and venereal and infectious diseases. Today there are 293 such centers in Mexico, their work-co-ordinated and directed from Mexico City by the Department of Rural Hygiene. In addition there are 188 smaller units staffed by a doctor and a nurse or two, and twenty mobile brigades on emergency call.

In Cuernavaca, the Borda Gardens where Maximilian and Carlotta once lived take in their daily quota of sightseers. Across the street the Public Health Center, set in its own landscaped garden, receives another kind of visitor. Through the iron gates flows a steady stream of men, women and children. The majority are poor. Many still rely on the medicine man, but they come to the clinic as a kind of double insurance.

That they are coming and of their own volition, is a tribute to the pioneering of nurses like Marta. Five years ago I accompanied another nurse on her rounds of the *vecindades*, the Mexican equivalent of our slum tenements. She spent hours trying to cajole, sullen, suspicious families into visiting the clinics. Most of them got rid of her politely, with a promise she knew would not be kept. Some closed the door in her face. One woman, a syphilitic, said indignantly, "They see you there without clothes on, no? And I a wife and mother!"

The Health Center's staff of only twelve nurses and six doctors reaches out to embrace the fifty thousand inhabitants of Cuernavaca and its surrounding villages. They take turns going from door to door in the city and rural slums. They talk on hygiene, inoculate against typhoid, smallpox, whooping cough, diphtheria, and scarlet fever, and persuade families to come to the clinics for regular examination. On their visits to the villages, where there are sometimes emergency cases and where they meet with violence, they are accompanied by a doctor.

Marta has been working at the Health Center for three years. She is twenty-two but seems much younger. Daughter of a prosperous cattle dealer, she doesn't have to work at all. She was drawn to the career, she admits, by the glamor of wearing the white uniform.

I still remember the flat taste of disappointment when I first met her. So they're taking romantic schoolgirls now! I thought. So much for Dr. Lira's idealism, which he had protested was uncompromising realism. A public health nurse, he had told me, must be a woman of mature intelligence and perception. She must be able to give lectures as if she were confiding homely gossip. She must command respect and affection, and have a way with children. She must be a social psychologist as well as a skilled technician. A bad nurse is worse than useless. She can alienate whole communities.

* * *

Set beside the superlative creature of a doctor's imagination, Marta seemed to me a very ordinary girl, far too young for her responsibilities.

I visited a *vecindad* with her. As we walked into the open courtyard surrounding the communal wash-basins of twenty families, each crowded into a single dark room, something happened to Marta. With me she had alternated between shyness and girlish inti-

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Oil.

By Francisco Gutierrez.

Ride to the North Star

By John W. Hilton

CHOQUINCAHUI is the name of a mountain and the name of the spring, as well. In the native Indian it means "north star." Occasionally the man who lives at Choquineahui would come down to the village with a burro load of papayas, mangoes, or summer tomatoes. These fruits were so fine, and the man so friendly, that Eunice and I finally decided to visit the little settlement and see the spring and fruit garden for ourselves.

I had been up the trail toward the north end of the ranch, several times, but never as far as Choquineahui spring. Once it had been for fresh-water crabs; another time, to collect a rare plant which the natives called "La Palma de la Virgen" (the virgin's palm).

Beyond the canyon of the virgin's palm I had not traveled the north trail, so we took one of the vaqueros to show us the way. Mac wanted him to check on some fences anyway.

Planters were still working in some of the fields as we passed in the early morning. They whistled or sang as they worked, rivaling the multitude of song birds in the trees. The sun had broken through light clouds after a red sunrise; and now it sparkled on the young, just peeping through the earliest fields; and shone like diamonds on the new-wet grass beside the trail. The vaquero said it might rain—that the red sunrise was a pretty sure sign. We refused to let it bother us. It was too beautiful a morning worry us.

As we climbed higher and left the fields we could look back and see the Rancho Guirocoba stretching away into the blue haze to the south. The patchwork of fields in the bottom of the valley was broken here and there by great oaks, clusters of small palms, and giant cacti of the pitahaya or fruit-bearing kind. Whether the original farmers were too lazy, or too artistic, to cut these fine growths will probably remain a secret of the past; but the effect is beautiful. It would take a hard-hearted person to cut them out now, even in the name of efficiency and advancement.



Oil.

By Margarita C. de Wehmann.

A canyon loomed ahead in the hills, and we were soon traveling through its shade. The little stream, swollen with the summer rains, rushed by like a mountain torrent, bouncing over the cypress roots and boulders in its bed, and waving the ferns and lilies along its margins. The smell of growing things and the scent of flowers was almost overpowering, as the canyon narrowed. It reminded me of a large greenhouse. In places, we had to stop a moment while the vaquero cut away the vines that had grown across the trail in the last month.

Finally we came to the spot where I had collected the first fresh-water crabs; but the pool was submerged in a welter of rushing water. No crabs were to be found. We did notice some extremely odd butterflies at this stop. They were marked with concentric circles or "eyes" of red, orange and black on a chocolate background. When they lit on a tree trunk and folded their wings, they simply disappeared.

I tried to catch some with my hat, and wished we had brought a butterfly net. Then I smiled at myself, as I took stock of the cameras and other paraphernalia we had already draped on our long-suffering horses. I did get very close to several, and could see that the outside of the wings was marked and colored to imitate rough bark. Even the edges of the wings had an uneven, torn appearance, that made it impossible to detect them at rest more than five feet away. The strangest thing about these butterflies, and one which I cannot get many people to believe, was the noise they occasionally made. They would sail about from sunlight to shadow as silently as any respectable butterfly, until they encountered another of apparently the opposite sex. Then the pair would whirl about in tight circles, like a couple of planes in a dogfight, and produce a sharp, very distinct clicking noise, that seemed to be synchronized with their wings. The faster they circled, the louder and faster the clicking became. They remain a mystery to us, to this day. I

came back to the spot with a butterfly net and cyanide jar, a week later, but none were to be seen; nor have I ever seen them in any other spot but that one shady canyon.

A little farther on, we stopped to admire a colony of lilies, belonging to the arum or calla family. They had very decorative leaves with cut edges, and small white flowers which, unlike many wild arums, had a pleasant odor. Eunice decided to get a flower collection, on the way back. Every turn of the trail seemed to reveal some new blossom we had never seen before. Bright-plumaged birds flashed ahead of us in the trees, and kept the woods echoing with their calls. Dragonflies as wide as a man's hand, with bodies and transparent wings dotted with black and red, flitted over the still spots in the stream. The whole place was like a dream in technicolor.

At the head of the canyon we emerged into a meadow, dotted with oak and palm clusters. The grass was deep and lush, sprinkled with rainbow-hued flowers, like jewels on green velvet. It was the sort of meadow that made a person envy the horses, grazing there. The meadow rose gently toward the summit of the pass ahead. Each side of the pass was flanked with towering crags, which have probably never been scaled by man. On their summits were pines and firs. We could look at the valley below and see every gradation, from tropics to alpine vegetation, in a single glance.

* * *

Out of the welter of flowers at our feet, I noticed something that looked familiar—yet very odd. It was a poinsettia in full bloom, in the middle of the summer; small and dwarfed, like the dwarf poinsettias in cultivation. But the red leaves, that looked like the flowers, were longer and more acute; and the stems were grasslike, and only about nine inches high. We got off our horses and searched the place for seed; but it was a little too early. This annual poinsettia is one of the seeds that I hope sometime to collect from Sonora, and try to domesticate.

Now, the trail led down into the canyon, of La Palma de la Virgen, shaded here by large-leaved palo blanco trees. Their white bark shone in the spots of sun that penetrated here and there.

Suddenly a deer flashed across the trail and made a great deal of noise, as it plunged on through the undergrowth. Flocks of yellow-crested quail flushed, as we passed; and giant blue doves cooed, like the tolling of distant bells. It was a hunters' paradise; but we were glad that the hunters hadn't found it.

The vaquero had ridden ahead; and now we met him waiting at a bend in the trail. He held something that looked like a flame in the shaft of light that came down through the trees. He had noticed our interest in flowers, and had found us something really fine. It was a giant tigridia, six inches across, shaped like a mariposa tulip, but colored like a tiger lily; the most beautiful flower we had ever seen in Mexico. A little farther down, we saw many of them growing, scattered under the trees. Their stems were five to six feet tall. We wondered what a Hollywood florist would pay for a dozen, as a window display; and again realized how really lucky we were.

At the bottom of the canyon we dismounted beside another sparkling stream; and I led Eunice to the hillside, beyond, where Howard Gentry and I had first found the rare palms, some years before.

The colony was still there, and the trees looked as beautiful and unreal as they did on that first day. The palma de la virgen is not actually a palm, but a cycad. This family of plants once formed an important part of the world's forests, during the coal age.

Now it has all but disappeared from the earth. They look like a cross between a small palm and a tree fern, and bear a cone which resembles a large furry pineapple. Inside this cone are large round nuts that are said to be edible.

The largest of this Sonora species is only three to four feet high. It looked dwarfed by the mass of maidenhair fern, two feet deep, and the hundreds of strange tigridias. Pale yellow and light-green butterflies, almost as large as my hand, sailed effortlessly from flower to flower. A gentle breeze swayed the cycad fronds; and the sunlight sparkled on them with an almost metallic luster. We stood there and looked for several minutes without saying a word. Some moments are like that, and can never be forgotten.

As we rode on down the canyon, we came upon a dozen chachalaca birds in a tree. They were busily eating the small purplish-black fruits, and making such a racket they did not hear us, at first. We had heard these birds close to the ranch; but it was seldom we got a look at one. These had not been shot at, and were more tame. They looked like a combination of a small turkey and pheasant. The plumage on the males was iridescent, with green and purple over brown. When they finally noticed us they flew up and disappeared in the thicker trees, making the ear-splitting call that sounds like their name rendered by a rusty old-fashioned pump.

The trail led up from the canyon, and onto another meadow pass called "La Mesa del Trigo." From this point the peak of Choquincahui loomed a veritable giant against the northern sky. The vaquero pointed to a clearing and some palm-thatched houses at its foot. This was our destination.

At the bottom of the hill we came upon the ruins of an old Spanish copper smelter; its broken stack, now smothered in luxuriant vines; and the adobe houses, crumbling among the trees that had grown back into the clearing. Our guide said the mine was about a kilometer away, and was a very good ledge of copper ore.

We were anxious to get to the fruit garden and eat our lunch; so we pushed on up the next hill. Finally, the thatched houses came into view again. We were greeted by a host of skinny dogs, barking in a wide range of pitch. The children were shy, and ran into the house; but the grownups were the acme of politeness. They must have spotted us on the trail; for they had hot coffee and tortillas, and insisted that we sit right down to eat with them. We got out our lunch and shared it with them. They sampled everything, and were amused; but I don't think they really relished any of our American delicacies, except the can of peaches we opened.

* * *

Some hard candy finally coaxed the children out of the house, and gradually they discovered we were human beings, no more dangerous than the people they had always known. The father apologized, because the little ones were "muy bronceo." He explained the they had never been away from the place—not even as far as Guirocoba.

Presently the older girl, about eleven, left for a moment; and, when she returned, she had a chachalaca bird. She put it in my wife's lap. It was as gentle as a pet hen. Then she brought a few grains of corn, and the bird ate right out of her hand. Eunice was enchanted.

The father finally volunteered the information that the little girl would like to sell the chachalaca, but was too bashful to say so. We had about as much use for a tame bird as we did for a crutch, at the mo-

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Oil.

By Carlos Ruano Llopis.

At the Plaza de Toros

By Hudson Strobe

PUSHING through the hurrying, remnants of the crowd under the shadows of the great iron girders, we arrived at the wooden door of the box, which was only three or four steps above the flat concrete. In the dimness of the low-ceilinged bottom-row box, with hardly more than a rectangular slit for seeing, I saw at once that this was the wrong way for Thérèse to be introduced to a bullfight. The tried advice was invariably: "One who doubts his reaction should see his first bullfight from a top gallery seat; There will be the crowd and all the spectacle and less of the painful details." Here hardly anything was to be seen but the sand of the arena and the barricade. Whatever there would be of bloody action would be in intense focus. None of the crowd in the "sombra" above us could be seen, and the tiers of cheap seats facing the sun across the arena seemed very far away.

The seats were not armed chairs, but two wooden benches, one behind the other on a foot-higher elevation. To be less prominent if overcome by emotion, Thérèse and the Englishwoman were put on the back bench with Sr. Casasús, our host, and the shaken little man. Toots, breathless with the delight at having "made it," sat on the front bench between Milstein the violinist and me.

In the two-minute interval before the trumpet sounded, Casasús gave abbreviated pointers to his lady guests. I heard him quote Pliny to the effect that Julius Caesar had introduced bullfighting into Rome in the first century B. C. probably from Thessaly. But in the Peninsula, old carvings showed that the sport was known to Spain long before the Romans or the Goths. The present technique and etiquette of the

bullfight, he said, had developed in the eighteenth century. From fighting on horseback with lance and cloak, fighters had got to the ground with banderilla, muleta, and sword. A "veronica," he explained, was a graceful pass a torero—the bullfighter on foot—made with a cape, and it was so called after Saint Veronica, who once wiped the face of the Saviour with a cloth. The cape played an important part in tricking the bull by making him feel foolish when his horns struck nothing; it was used to tire him, sometimes to weaken his attacks by stopping him short, or by changing his course abruptly.

"The wrist is peculiarly important—" Señor Casasús broke off at the sound of the trumpet. The twenty thousand-odd spectators quieted as a horseman in sixteenth-century regalia rode across the ring to the box of the master of ceremonies. His box was almost directly across the ring from us. The man bowed, the impresario gave permission for the fight, the band played. Out of the gates came the three matadors in gay-colored silk, with elegant capes draped over their left arms, and marched together toward the master's box. Behind came the banderilleros and the picadors and the lesser functionaries. The host explained how each matador—the man who actually killed the bull—had a cuadrillo of about six men working at his direction, the banderilleros to play the bull on foot with their capes and to place the banderillas, and the picadors, who remained mounted.

When the entrance march was finished the matadors tossed their parade capes to friends who spread them out to decorate the walls of the stands, and then

they retired along the red fence that surrounded the arena. "The parade capes of the stars are often superb, and cost thousands of dollars," Señora Casasús informed her lady guests over her shoulder. "But the men use just cerise and yellow percale of the actual fighting."

A horseman rode up to the impresario and the master of ceremonies tossed him a key. He caught it deftly and the crowd gave him a friendly cheer. The man wheeled his horse and dashed to unlock the door of the toril, where the first bull to be slaughtered was waiting.

An intense hush fell upon the crowd. The master of ceremonies signaled with his handkerchief. The trumpet sounded again, the door opened. For a moment, nothing. And then a glossy black bull bolted from the darkened enclosure into the fierce glare of afternoon. He stopped short in bewilderment, with the thousands of enemy eyes looking down upon him. He did not know that he had one friend at least in the audience—Thérèse was on his side.

The small barb which had been thrust in the bull's right shoulder at his entrance, to anger him, showed the colors of his breeding ranch. "Think," said Milstein, "four or five years of the most expert care and expensive rearing—all for this last quarter-hour in the beast's life." The violinist had been to a bullfight before and knew something of the ritual, but he was still uncertain just how to feel and think about it all.

"I don't like the looks of that bull," said Toots, staring with a practiced eye. "He looks 'manso' to me—tame. I hope the other five are better."

Thérèse learned to her horror that there were six bulls to be killed by the three different matadors—she had imagined there would be only one.

"Look," said Señor Casasús, being the perfect host, "the banderilleros are trailing their capes before the bull so that the matador can judge which eye he uses most and which horn is his favorite one for hooking."

The bull would charge. The men would rise on their toes, suck in their breath, make graceful arcs, and the horns would just miss their chests as the bull lunged at the cape. This part of the performance was not so bad. Thérèse and the Englishwoman relaxed a bit.

The first bullfighter was not impressive-looking. He was below middle height and I judged him to be close to thirty-five, whereas the other two "novilleros" were probably a year or two past twenty—the proper age for "novilleros." The first man made some routine passes with his cape, and twice seemingly showed his disdain for danger. But I felt he was not in good form, and imagined him to be a has-been or one who had never quite made the grade. When he signaled for the picadors and they came out mounted on their nags, I heard Thérèse's quick intake of breath. "But see," I said consolingly, "the horses are padded. They wear mattresses, or something like those contraptions baseball catchers use to protect their fronts. You won't see any entrails spilled on the ground, as in the past generation of bullfighting."

* * *

"Protective padding for horses," said the Englishwoman, "was at the instigation of the English-born Queen of Spain, Alfonso's wife; but it was not made law until Primo de Rivera became Dictator."

"In San Sebastián," I said, "I heard that the Queen used opera glasses with the lens painted black, so that she could not see a thing."

Unfortunately one picador guided his horse right in front of our box—and out of his unbandaged left eye the poor creature showed its terror. It had evidently been used in the arena before, and survived,

and knew what was coming to it again. But the fat-tish picador sat there half-grinning, his face radiant with stupidity. The bull charged. The picador aimed his long "pica" at the bull's shoulder. As the steel point of the lance went in, the pain and surprise made the bull attack the horse savagely, trying to toss horse and rider, but not able to get his horn through the quilted padding. "Close your eyes," I warned Thérèse over my shoulder "or just look at your lap, and it won't be so bad."

The picador jabbed again, and this time his "pica" went too low down on the side near the ribs, and blood spouted. Both of the Casasús and the little Mexican had risen and were yelling warnings and imprecations at the picador. "Idiot! Imbecile! You'll ruin the bull!" At the next charge, horse and rider toppled over and banged into the wooden barricade a few feet in front of us; the picador's flat hat with the pompon flew over the barrier and dropped in the passageway. Despite the heavy protective armor under the chamois skin of his right leg, the plump picador climbed over the barricade to safety. The miserable horse took the powerful horn thrusts. The matador and the banderilleros waved their capes frantically trying to attract the attention of the bull from his victim.

"Get him away," screamed Toots, "get him away!" Then, turning to me indignantly, "The bull will wear himself out on the horse and have no eagerness to attack." To the Englishwoman she said over her shoulder: "The picador and pic are not to injure the bull severely, but to weaken him. That fool pic stuck him too deep and not in the right place. There's too much blood."

Thérèse's head was bent and her eyes shut, but I knew she had seen the thick red blood streaming from the bull's black hide.

The men got the bull in the center of the ring again. Attendants coaxed the terrified and injured horse to its feet. It was such an object of weak and shivering despair that it almost sank when the picador remounted. I knew it would die from internal injuries soon after it had left the ring, if it was not mercifully dispatched with a sharp knife.

During the second bout with the horses I said to Thérèse: "Just keep your eyes entirely shut. I'll tell you when to look." Then at last I said: "That's all with the horses. Now this next part requires great skill, and you can look." But I did not look back at her. I knew she was trembling with indignation and pity.

A banderillero came forward without a cape to face the bull. In his hand he held the two shafts with the sharp, harpoonlike barbs, but festooned with carnival-like ribbons. The banderillero called the bull's attention, and as the animal charged he ran to meet him as gaily as a bridegroom on his way to bed. As the bull reached him, the man rose on his toes, placed the banderillas deftly in the bull's shoulders, and swerved gracefully away from the horns of death. The bull, maddened with new pain and dazed at missing his prey, tossed the fore part of his body from side to side in an effort to shake out the intruding pain. Then he pawed the sand and bellowed in frustrated rage.

Not being an aficionado, the most exciting part of the bullfight to me is the placing of the banderillas—and in that last moment when the torero leaps with such grace from grazing death I involuntarily tense every muscle in my body and hold my breath. It is a natural reflex with me, for the excitement is almost painful. I have been told, however, that it is not really one of the best moments in a fight.

When the second banderillero came out to place his darts, I was too lost in my own excitement to pay

any attention to Thérèse. The feat this time proved still more thrilling, for a horn tip caught in the embroidery of the man's jacket and ripped it. Toots let herself go and screamed and grabbed me by the thigh. The crowd yelled. Milstein stood up and sank back weakly. The banderillero tore off the ripped embroidery and tossed it aside, and walked away casually with his back to the bull, as if his own life were no more than a bagatelle or a strip of lace to be thrown away for the pleasure of the crowd. The spectators let loose thundering applause.

Thérèse opened her eyes only after the applause had spent its fury, and she saw nothing but the tormented beast trying in his pain to shake the beribboned shafts from his shoulders.

"But the people are enjoying it!" she said in horror.

"The man was very brave," I said.

And then the bull, seeking some sort of protection, came trotting over to the place where he had encountered his first horse and had his little moment of victory. I was afraid that would happen. I knew about the "querencia"—how a bull would find a place in the ring where he felt more comfortable, and would always try to return to it. Often the area about the door from which he entered was the chosen "querencia," or home. Señor Casasús was explaining the psy-

chology to Milstein, and saying how difficult it was sometimes to stir the bull from his preferred spot.

* * *

So now the dart-stuck beast came and stood in front of our nose and eyes, his rump almost against the red fence. He was bleeding more than I had ever seen a bull bleed, and the sleek blackness of his coat made the blood redder and more bloody-looking. As he swayed a little in pain from side to side the four gaily-colored banderillas waved like mocking fairy wands. There were still two more darts to be placed. The matador and the banderilleros twirled their capes and moved enticingly before him, but the bull stood there resolutely, as if he was onto their tricks and knew now he could not possibly win.

Toots said contemptuously: "Manso, manso. I told you that bull was tame from the first. He's got no spirit at all." The little Mexican, now completely recovered from his fright in the motorcar, stood up and made a gesture something like fist-shaking, both at the bull and at the "torero," and cried, "Cobarde! Coward!"

Thérèse with her eyes wide-open was saying quietly, more like a prayer: "Oh, can't this be stopped?"

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Oil.

By Carlos Ruano Llopis.



Patterns of an Old City

AT THE FINAL THRESHOLD

By Howard S. Phillips

THE fine marble-faced house in Avenida Jalisco was gone and Avenida Jalisco, now full of shops and box-like apartment houses, was called Avenida Alvaro Obregón. Only the gnarled ash-trees along the calzada bore a trace of the past, a vague reminiscence of a place she knew. And yet she was not greatly dismayed by the change, for she knew that this street, like all the streets in the city, had been transformed by time beyond recognition, that almost everything she remembered or knew had been ruthlessly swept away. And as she paced along the calzada the despairing feeling that perhaps she was walking in a kind of wilderness, futilely wandering in a trackless maze, returned in a sudden pang, and an exhausting weariness bore down like a great weight on her shoulders. Laboriously dragging her feet over the gravel she made her way to the nearest bench. An elderly bootblack came out of a doze and murmured unthinkingly, "grasa," then looked at her slightly embarrassed and moved to the farther end.

It was the third house from the corner, she thought, this very corner. And it is probably this building with the furniture store on the ground floor that stands on its site. The image of the house clearly emerged in her mind—the panelled massive oak zaguán doors, the four balconies facing the street, the inner patio with the marble naiad eternally leaping over the talavera basin of the fountain, the damp fresh smell of calla lilies bordering the inner terrace.

There was the sala with crystal chandeliers and the black and red mantón over the piano, and the Chinese hangings over the windows, and the pleasant parquet floor. The remote notes of Chopin and the unintelligible sounds uttered by Roger resounded in her ears, and she saw herself sitting at the piano and Roger playing with his toys over the rug. It was on afternoons like this, she thought, when Leslie was away at the mine. The vision persisted, it grew nearer, became piercingly sharp, making her sense the anguish of loss and of solitude more acute than physical pain.

I am looking for something, she thought, and I am afraid to find it. I am afraid that it will not be actually there even if I find it. The house is gone, and the city and the people I knew—it has all vanished, and I am sitting in this bench lost with all that is gone, with all that can never be found.

And yet, beyond her desolation, distant images, persistently emerging through the mist of forty and some odd years, crowded her mind. She saw herself as the young and beautiful Señora Witherspoon, the wife of a wealthy mining man, the mistress of the fine marble-faced house in Avenida Jalisco, popular member of the American colony, enjoying an easy, carefree life; bored and lonely at times, though always replete with eager, exciting anticipations and sustained by a zeal for greater fulfillment.

For as she remembered it now, her life with Leslie, though quite pleasant and rewarding in her inner thoughts and hidden yearnings, had never defined an ultimate completion. She was fond of him always; she found comfort in his unfailing kindness; she accepted his love and devotion with gratitude, but she was never quite able to give a fair return for what she received, and that—though she did not fully perceive it until after it all came to an end—was due to the absence of veritable love.

She was very young when she married Leslie—

at an age when a girl is likely to accept almost any plausibly fitting proposal of marriage without completely probing or comprehending her heart—and she was probably carried away by the romantic prospect of living in a foreign country and being the wife of a man whose occupation actually consisted of digging for gold. Leslie, moreover, with his shy, ingenuous manner and candid though keenly perceptive mind, his big, loose-jointed body and a rough-hewn handsome face, was a rather attractive person. He was indeed a most unusual type of man—hardly the type of man a girl is likely to meet at Louisville, Kentucky—with a most unusual background and future possibilities.

She had heard a great deal about him before she knew him in person, from his sister Judy, her schoolmate and closest friend, and when she met him during his visit in Louisville she almost instantly knew that he fell in love with her and that she would accept him if he asked. Within a month they were married and bound for Mexico.

* * *

It was impossible, he told her, for a white woman to live at the mine, deep in the mountains of Guerrero, removed from all elementary comfort or trace of civilization and accessible after days of wearisome journey by train, muleback and in a launch down the Balsas River. It would be hardly the place a man would take his bride on a honeymoon. But she assured him that a wife's place was at her husband's side and that sharing his hardships would be fun.

She endured uncomplainingly the life in a three-room cabin, perched at the slope of a towering mountain, amid heaps of slag and a cluster of thatched huts, and with the exception of but three other American employees at the mine, single men living in similar cabins, only native Indians for neighbors. Save for occasional trips to the city, she endured it for over a year, until she became pregnant and Leslie, who often said that a mining man might have a lot of money, but it was of little practical use, acquired the fine house in Avenida Jalisco. She remained in the city after Roger was born, and counted the days to the end of each month when Leslie spent a weekend with her, a brief weekend, preceded by anxious anticipation and never somehow completely fulfilling.

And presently, the anxiety wore away and her anticipation became a habit, part of a normal routine. For though at times she was lonely and bored, her days were taken up with little Roger and the task of keeping the spacious house in order, and she seldom lacked congenial friends whenever she sought diversion in the evenings. There were always some people dropping in at the house, or she could call on someone. She was young, handsome and popular; but her conduct was always irreproachable. It never lent cause for suspicion or gossip.

* * *

She met Bertram Spence at the house of some friends, and beyond observing that he was somewhat odd in appearance took no special note of him until she heard him talk. She had never indeed heard anyone talk the way he did, say the things he said; she had

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Oil.

By A. G. Warshawsky.

Revenge

By Kim Schee

It was Sunday afternoon, and the Gallo de Oro Cantina hummed with voices. Emilio, a young engineer from the Santa Rosa silver mine, and I occupied a small table opposite the entrance. Most of the customers present were owners, rather ex-owners, of the haciendas, whom Emilio had known as a kid on his father's hacienda. They were certainly a colorful group, rigged out in their heavily embroidered charro suits, their enormous monogrammed sombreros, silver spurs, and fierce Prussian-style mustaches.

"I like the looks of these hacendados," I remarked. "It's a shame they've been stripped of practically everything."

"It does seem a shame, Señor," replied Emilio. "Their lives were very exciting. They were men of extreme passions. Now, of course, they've been tamed. They used to talk in deeds; now they are full of innocuous words. I am glad my father died ten years ago—before this depressing epoch of verbal readjustment. He, at least, died a man."

"Judging from what one hears and reads about the hacendados," I said, "they were very hard masters. Is that true?"

"Sí, Señor, that is true. They were very hard masters and very cruel men. But their cruelty always had a dramatic quality. Today there is cruelty—but, a cruelty that is smug and pointless. Since most of us are still victims of cruelty, I, for one, prefer a dramatic form of cruelty. Take for instance Señor Don Felipe Castaño, the man facing you at the far end of the bar. He was a master of cruelty. Have you ever heard how he treated his nephew?"

"No," I replied, "I have never heard of Señor Don Felipe—a—"

"Castaño, Señor. Entonces, I shall tell you about him."

"Don Felipe owned one of the largest and richest haciendas in his part of the country. He was proud, arrogant, passionate, full of tempers. He could be Christlike one day and the next as mean as all the devils in hell. The one exception to this rule was his only daughter, for whom he had a fanatical devotion. She was named Rosario, and it is said that Don Felipe actually believed that she could do no wrong. The only other kin he had the slightest feeling for was his nephew, Armando, who was a medical student in Mexico City. Don Felipe was wary of anyone who lived and worked outside of an hacienda, but he liked Armando in spite of his chosen profession. Rosario also liked Armando. She liked him because he was so gay and full of life and so clever. No one could tell funnier stories or sing ranchero songs better than Armando. She wished Efigenio were more like him, for she really loved Efigenio, even though he was only her father's gardener. She had never seen anyone quite as beautiful as Efigenio, and he always looked so shy and frightened whenever she came near him. But she knew he loved her, and she determined, like any spoiled girl, to break down Efigenio's reserve, to have him on his knees confessing his undying love for her."

"Bueno. A few months before his final examination, Armando came to the hacienda to pass the Christmas holidays. This time he was gayer, more entertaining, than ever before. He put everyone at the hacienda in a festive mood, including Don Felipe, who laughed and drank more than was good for him. When Armando departed for Mexico City, the hacienda was like a tomb for several weeks afterward."

* * *

"Six months later Don Felipe got wind of some malicious rumors about Rosario. At first he ignored

them, but the rumors persisted. Finally he talked with her in private. Rosario was extremely indignant. She denounced all such rumors. How could she be pregnant—with whom?—it was ridiculous! Don Felipe thought so too, but nevertheless he observed that Rosario's figure was stouter. Unless he was suffering from hallucinations Rosario possessed an abdominal curve that was hardly normal. And from that moment on Don Felipe was consumed by suspicion.

"Who was the he-goat, the son of a whore, the pig? Don Felipe could think of many men who had been on the hacienda, but the only prospect among them was Armando. And the more he thought of Armando the more incensed he became. That little whipper-snapper had abused the most sacred rules of hospitality. He had used Don Felipe's hacienda merely as a trysting place to seduce Rosario. Dios sabe how long it had been going on. Perhaps for years. And Rosario only eighteen years old. Never before had the Castaño family suffered such treachery. It called for revenge, but a revenge befitting the escutcheon of the Castaños.

"When Armando was in the midst of his final examinations, he received an especially flowery letter from his uncle Don Felipe inviting him to the hacienda to celebrate his graduation. Don Felipe promised him a fiesta that he would never forget. Armando waited until he had finished his examinations and wrote his uncle an equally flowery letter stating that he was now a full-fledged doctor and would arrive at the hacienda the following Saturday. Upon receipt of this letter Don Felipe sent out invitations to the fiesta to everyone of importance who he suspected was gossiping about Rosario.

"The fiesta began with a banquet served to not less than fifty hacendados. As guest of honor Armando was seated at the head of the table with Don Felipe at his right. The table was heavy with food and wine and mezeal. The guests tried their best to be gay and jovial, but it was obvious that they were ill at ease and worried. Between bites, drinks, and conversation they kept a watchful eye on Don Felipe. Armando, however, noticed nothing. He was having a wonderful time. He told Don Felipe all the latest stories and gossip from Mexico City. He didn't even notice that Don Felipe appeared preoccupied. At the end of the dinner Armando made a speech eloquently praising his uncle's virtues and thanking him particularly for the fiesta in honor of his graduation. It was a good speech and a short speech. The hacendados looked at one another with relief. The atmosphere had been cleared. They were no longer tense. When Don Felipe arose and started to speak they sat back contentedly in their chairs, completely relaxed. Don Felipe briefly thanked his nephew for his flattering eulogy, and then he began a rambling story which had some

moral attached to it. I forget the particulars of the story, but I do remember that it had something to do with a bear who had befriended a man, and the man took advantage of their friendship and later killed the bear. Don Felipe told the story with such passion, grimaces, and gestures that everyone's attention was concentrated on him and the story was forgotten. At the end of the story Don Felipe's face was flushed, and his features so twisted that he looked like a gargoyle. Then without the slightest warning he pulled out a knife, flicked it open, sliced off Armando's right ear, and in the same gesture laid it before him on the table. 'A graduation present!' he remarked and calmly walked from the room.

* * *

"Two weeks later Rosario heard of the incident and went to her father. She confessed that it was not Armando who was the father of her child, but Efigenio, the gardener. She admitted that she had been very fond of Efigenio but imagined him to be innocent like herself, which, of course, was not the case. Later she learned that Efigenio was a married man with a family. She had intended to tell Don Felipe, but her pride forbade her. To save the Castaño honor she was willing to take her own life. Then she knelt, kissed Don Felipe's hand and wept very touchingly. And probably for the first time in his life tears fell from Don Felipe's eyes as he stroked Rosario's head and assured her that he would arrange everything, that everything would be all right!

"Don Felipe soon arranged everything. He sought out the wife of Efigenio and discovered that Efigenio was anything but a model husband. His wife claimed that he gave her scarcely any money, was in the habit of beating her, and kept her pregnant all the time. Don Felipe consoled her and then gave her a tidy sum of money just in case something happened to Efigenio. She accepted the money without further argument. Several days later Efigenio did have an accident—a bullet clean through his heart.

"As for Armando, Don Felipe offered him a dowry of 100,000 pesos and made him sole heir to all his properties on the condition that he marry Rosario before the birth of her child. Armando felt that the offer was commensurate with the loss of his ear and accepted. He married Rosario soon after, and they went to Mexico City to live.

"Today Armando is a very successful doctor, and Rosario a mother of five. They are very happy together. Armando has never bothered to fix his ear. He tells everyone it was the luckiest thing that ever happened to him; and if he ever had it replaced with an artificial one, it might change his luck. That ear, also, brought Don Felipe luck. He lost his hacienda and all his possessions during the last revolution. He didn't lose Armando, however. And Armando pays better dividends than any Mexican hacienda these days!"





Oil.

By Roy MacNicol.

Mexico's Natural Resources

By Tomme Clark Call

ROUGHLY a fifth of the land area of Mexico is forested—about a half of that in virgin timber—and the country retains great producing and potential tree-wealth in the coastlands, the southern hardwood belt, and some unexploited temperate and highland zones. Unfortunately, however, on the great central plateau, centuries of deforestation have produced one of the nation's most lamentable and baffling economic problems. There the barren bordering mountains attract only the cloudbursts of a short rainy season, which deluge the bald plains with torrents that disastrously erode soil, cut gulleys unreachable for irrigation, and fill reservoirs with silt and gravel to choke irrigation and power works.

Mexico was not always thus. Through the centuries the Indian tribes slashed down trees for wood and charcoal for heating and cooking. Even until recent years, Mexico City alone used 12,000 acres of timber yearly as charcoal. For the Spaniards' mines, for example, around Taxco and Zacatecas, hills were denuded for miles around, leaving vast blighted areas. Plant diseases went unchecked and killed old ones. Deserts and near-deserts have been man-made throughout Mexico since the beginning of chronicled time.

This destruction and neglect can be repaired only in many decades, and never fully. It was not until 1944 that worth-while forest-practices legislation gave adequate conservation powers to the Federal Government. The Secretariat of Agriculture was given authority to create forest reserves, protection-zones, and parks and to regulate their use: to regulate cutting and grazing on reforestation areas and to conduct a national education program. Since 1944, the law has been strengthened, but enforcement is another matter.

Even without counter-pressure from strong private-enterprise and related political interests, policing in rural Mexico would be most difficult. Currently,

however, the government is undertaking an apparently determined effort to protect existing forest resources and rebuild deforested areas. The head of the forestry division in the Department of Agriculture has been promoted to assistant secretary, and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization called upon for comprehensive technical assistance. In 1951 the United Nations sent a mission to Mexico.

The government is expanding nurseries to provide millions of seedlings, importing others. State commissions made up of government officials and private enterprises are being organized to further local reforestation plans. President Aleman in May proclaimed 1951 as 'Arbor Year' and pledged reforestation and prevention of ruinous exploitation of existing resources as major twin objectives of his administration. The immediate goal was 200 million plantings within sixteen months. Reforestation brigades were organized and the armed forces called upon for assistance, as in the hoof-and-mouth disease campaign. Olive-grove culture is among the projects being undertaken on the denuded plateau, a promising addition to Mexico's tree-wealth already extensive in citrus culture, chicle, coffee, banana, and other tropical fruit growths.

The Department of Agriculture announced in 1951 that wood exports would be cut a third for the 18 months following, a selective reduction by species, and be limited to processed woods. Timber cutters would be required to make commensurate new plantings and follow other conservation practices. Charcoal is being outlawed, to favor increased domestic use of mounting oil, gas and electricity production.

Example arrests, suspensions of cutting licenses, confiscation of illegal wood movements, and checking of operating companies' books have been publicized, with fines and imprisonment threatened. Even clear-

ing of tree growth to bring more land into cultivation for much-needed food, feed, and fiber must be approved by federal officials. The new industrial drain on forest resources, as in reserves set aside for the expanding pulp and paper industry, is being critically watched.

Should this burst of enthusiasm crystalize into a vigorously sustained program, Mexico can greatly improve its total agriculture and industry, as well as enhance its direct forest produce income. Emphasis on domestic industries for processing forestry products, at the expense of raw materials exports in this field, could substantially assist Mexico's general economic development. For example, a plywood industry of three plants in 1946 is expanding both in southern and northern Mexico, with plentiful raw materials available for future growth.

Research already is finding new uses to add to the many already existing for forestry resources as varied in Mexico as anywhere in the world, ranging from tropical hardwoods through temperate zone to highland species. Cognizance of the ramified economic wealth of trees has come late to Mexico, but not too late if the government's program can be permanently established enforced.

* * *

Also, at long last, Mexico is looking to the sea as a fresh source of national wealth. Mexico's marine resources are enormous, diverse, and virtually untapped, far surpassing those of the similarly neglected oceanic industries of Texas and Central America.

Though Montezuma feasted on fresh fish brought to his regal table by relay runners, Indian Mexico was rooted to the land; only a few coastal tribes sought livelihood from the salt waters. The Spanish conquerors, though of the greatest maritime power in their time, were interested only in mines and agriculture in Mexico. Through Mexico's century of revolutions, sea wealth was scarcely touched.

Consequently, it is estimated, Mexico today utilizes no more than 5 per cent of the sea wealth along its 4,574-mile Pacific coast and 1,727-mile Gulf and Caribbean coasts, and nearly three-fourths of that production goes to export. Commercial fishing, mostly small-scale and backward in equipment and methods, extends over less than a third of Mexico's littorals. And into the postwar period, Mexico still was importing sizable quantities of seafood from the United States.

Up against food shortages and inflation, however, Mexico is waking up to the fact that its coastal resources offer far more than the tourist dollars attracted by some of the world's finest deep sea sport fishing. By 1945, production of canned fish was 40 per cent higher than prewar (1937), and the annual pack has been expanding steadily since 1945 with construction of new canneries, especially on the Pacific side.

Though the industry continues to emphasize export—and its operating costs remain precariously high—canning, improvement of transport, refrigerating facilities, and better integration of the industry generally should in time push Mexican consumption toward the eleven pounds annually consumed by the average North American. If so, Mexico City, for example, should consume some sixteen times the three tons of fish now eaten there daily.

Not only would that improve the deficient Mexican diet, but it also would provide thousands of new jobs. In Mazatlan, for example, nearly 30,000 people were making a good living in 1951 out of a shrimp industry that did not exist there in 1940. In Guaymas and Manzanillo, also on the Pacific coast, the story is similar. That development will add im-

portantly to Mexico's foreign exchange; West Coast shrimp alone brought 20 million dollars on the United States market in 1950. Campeche and Tabasco on the Gulf enjoyed a similar shrimp boom, with some 300 ships operating in 1951 in Campeche Sound's 'inexhaustible' beds.

In the past Mexico's fish have attracted fleets from faraway Japan, and now the country's small navy is hard-pressed to patrol against unauthorized fishing by Cuban and United States fleets. To avoid a dog-in-the-manger stigma, however, Mexico needs to expand considerably and modernize its own fishing fleets, as it is beginning to do.

Furthermore, Mexico is spending heavily to improve existing, and open new, major ports. A new 11½-million-dollar investment in 1951 was going into Mexico's oldest and leading port, Veracruz, whose population increased 60 per cent in the past ten years. Matamoros, Tampico, and Tuxpan on the Gulf are also building. A Minatitlan-Salina Cruz pipeline will serve a Pacific tanker. Storage facilities for export cement were built at Salina Cruz in 1951, and docks and warehouses were repaired at Puerto Mexico. Mazatlan, Guaymas, and Manzanillo on the Pacific coast are being developed not only as resort spots but also as important commercial ports, with new highways pushing toward the sea. Other port works were undertaken at Frontera, Chetumal, Acapulco, and La Paz.

Mexico also means to handle more of its foreign trade in its own vessels, as well as extend coastwise shipping to counter deficiencies in rail and highway transport. The Navy Department has called upon commercial interests for more investment in navigation companies, with subsidies as the incentive, and the Federation of Chambers of Commerce has responded favorably.

From practically nothing twenty years ago, the Mexican merchant marine in 1951 had 272,000 tons—a 49,000-ton increase over the previous year—more than half composed of the eighteen-tanker Pemex fleet led by the 10,700-ton President Aleman. Further expansion should lower Mexico's shipping costs, reduce the drain on foreign exchange, and promote the plan of example trade with other Latin American countries. The new Naval Academy at Veracruz will provide officer personnel for the planned expansion of the merchant marine, as well as provide a naval reserve.

It takes a long time for a landlubber people to become maritime-minded, but Mexican economic thinkers are looking in that direction. Certainly the wealth and income are there, and Mexico has all the elements required to develop them.

* * *

It is doubtful that any other native population in the world surpasses the Mexican in the quality, diversity, and general participation in the indigenous or folk arts. Part and full-time handicraft workers are estimated to number some 3 million artisans, or about 15 per cent of the population, at peak production periods. That was particularly true during the wartime boom in exports (1943-44) of curios and handicrafts to the United States, which then took 85 per cent of the expanded output. By 1947, however, exports were only 40 per cent of greatly reduced production, with the decline in demand due largely to deteriorated quality.

Pre-Conquest Indian handicrafts were the marvel of the early explorers. After a decline during the initial Conquest period, the folk arts enjoyed a golden era for a century, supplying the newly rich Spanish

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Water Color.

By Mary S. Elwes.

An Old Street in Cuyatlán

By Charles V. Craig

THERE were then no numbers on the houses of the main street in Cuyatlán. Each block, however, had a particular name of its own and nearly every house had been lime-washed a slightly different color, now faded to a post-pastel intensity. Thus, if it were known that a friend lived in a turquoise house in the Sixteenth of September block, there would be a fair chance to find him without benefit of numbers.

Apart from the residual coloration, all the houses were much alike, being box-like adobes with flat roofs, iron-studded doors and deeply recessed iron-grilled windows. Through any open door the pleasant standardized courtyard or "patio" could be seen—stone or tiled pavement swept immaculately clean, iron scroll-work supporting pots with innumerable flowering plants—nothing more. Off this patio opened the living room or "sala." This was always ringed with bent-wood furniture and ornaments of a strange and usually ecclesiastic influence. On the tiled floor was a woven reed mat of exact fit. The exactitude was not due to any liking in Cuyatlán for this quality but to the fact that it was woven to size on the floor by itinerant mat makers. The street itself was paved from wall to wall with nicely rounded pebbles. Certain of these had become loose and had been used for divers purposes, some no doubt as weapons in forgotten "tumultos."

The Catholic orphanage at the lower end of the town was centuries old but the dozens of super-active youngsters swarming over the old gardens gave it an air of enduring if not always endearing youth. During school hours there was always the terrific racket of studying aloud, so dear to Spanish-American pedagogy. Heaven, literally, only knows what they learned, but there was a faint suggestion of the English language in the cry that always arose when we came in sight. "Give me one cent, give me one cent." I never saw anyone comply with this modest demand, per-

haps because it clearly was not a request for alms at all, but a triumphant chant demonstrating the boys' basic knowledge of English and of one of its more important uses. I understand that the chant has been suitably modernized and is now "Give me five cents."

Near the orphanage was the Capilla or chapel which had been built largely by the Jiménez family with money from their bonanza in the Santa Rosa mine. The Capilla was some years a-building and this period unfortunately outlasted the productive glory of the Santa Rosa. As a result, although most of the edifice was of beautifully, matched pinkish rhyolite blocks it became necessary to piece it out with adobe bricks. At the very end, the Santa Rosa being in extremis, even more drastic substitutions were made. The builders were not called upon, as in the biblical frustration, to make bricks without straw but they did descend to using straw without bricks, certain areas and holes in the north wall being stuffed with this material. Fortunately, wandering donkeys were unable to partake of this straw under the impression that it constituted an informal communion, for the reason that it formed the patio wall of an adjacent house which the Jiménez family had cannily built for rental to those who could scare up fifteen pesos a month and did not mind the chapel bells sounding off in their ears some two hundred and forty times a day.

In the next house, the chapel music being somewhat muted by distance and another high wall, lived Señor Doctor Galván. Dr. Galván was a very decent chap, very well-dressed in a formal archaic manner, and with a good reputation; most of the large ranchers in the area being his patients. He had a perfect bedside manner and so estimable was his practise that practically all his patients actually slept in beds. Those who slept on the ground on a grass mat were clearly not entitled to the benefits of a bed-side manner, if they rated a visit from Doctor Galván at all. In the latter case their chance for recovery was considerably

enhanced. If the Doctor accidentally made a correct diagnosis he invariably followed it with the most unsuitable treatment imaginable. Mexican professionals are an intelligent and gifted lot, but their technical schools, at that time anyway, were really atrocious. Properly trained abroad, they made as good doctors and engineers as anybody, but no one in Cuyatlán aspired to education much beyond Guadalajara.

If a person survived a visit to Dr. Galván he encountered Señor Don Antonio Contreras in the next house. Don Antonio was a very old man, always dressed in a seemingly dark suit of outmoded cut, outlined throughout with black satin braid. He always wore a black pearl pin in his cravat and had a faintly cosmopolitan air about him, no doubt due to his having visited the Paris Exposition in his youth. There, being from an arid climate, he was entranced with the many fountains in the Exposition grounds and the apparently effortless ease with which they handled large quantities of water, an ease not shared by the mules who hoisted water out of his mine through "malacates de sangre" or "hoists of blood." He cleverly traced this phenomenon to a huge low-pressure steam pump nearby and, the Exposition being about to close, he actually bought this monstrosity and shipped it to Mexico. There it was found that no one of the main sections of the pump was small enough to go down his shaft or into his mine workings. It remained on his mine dump, disjointed and forlorn, for a matter of fifty years.

Now Don Antonio was really a clever chap, and a successful mine operator as long as he stuck with the changeless ritual of old Mexican mining methods. Suddenly confronted with new and foreign techniques he was defeated and outraged. His next door neighbor, Captain Saturnino Rodríguez, had a similar experience. The story was that Captain Rodríguez had been a highly successful chief of the Rurales in the Puebla district, keeping strict order there. On one occasion, long ago, he received orders from the capital to the effect that when (not if!) he caught another bandit he was not to shoot him while trying to escape or otherwise, but to turn him over to twelve representative citizens of Puebla. This he did and the twelve, after some deliberation, turned the culprit loose. Captain Rodríguez, outraged, immediately recaptured his bandit and shot him full of holes without more ado. This natural sequence of events caused him to be demoted to the command of a small group of gendarmes in the Cuyatlán section.

Of late years Captain Rodríguez, now fat and no longer fierce, was always pleased to tell the story of his demotion, especially to Americans, to whose generally weird ideas he, not without some reason, attributed his downfall. "But twelve men, Señor. Why in the name of God twelve men?" A listener might elect to explain the virtues of the jury system but the Captain would shake his head sadly and ask: "What do you think would have happened to the twelve men and their families if they had decided to kill the bandit, and his relatives and friends heard about it?" The general idea was that while it was quite all right for a Captain of Rurales to shoot a bandit in cold blood, any private citizens concerned with applying decadent Gringo customs in the matter would be liable to bloody reprisals. The listener would then be left to ponder the advisability of indiscriminately applying such institutions and ideas in foreign lands.

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And so on up the street, the houses very much the same, the people very, very different. There was one striking similarity that affected about three-quarters of the households. In these nobody had a job, much as they would have liked to work at anything except

manual labor, which would have socially destroyed them for all time. There were no paying investments except an occasional small rental. How did they manage to live?

Thackeray, in his "Vanity Fair" captioned a chapter with the receipt "How to Live on Nothing a Year." It appears that the desirable feat was accomplished mostly through the ruthless abuse of credit by Becky Sharp. The Nothing a Year people in Cuyatlán had no credit to abuse, no Becky Sharps and any innate ruthlessness was well curbed by circumstances. Still and all, they managed to live, quite cheerfully and indefinitely, on the amount indicated. A hypothetical case history might be illuminating:

Alvaro Guzmán was in school in Guadalajara when his widowed mother died in Cuyatlán. As the pittance supplied by her brother, a Deputy in the national congress ceased at her death, Alvaro elected not to pursue his legal studies. This was probably a wise decision as there were ten times as many lawyers in the State as could possibly make a living, a living depending more on proper standing with the Governor than on knowledge of the legal intricacies of the Code Napoleon. After a due period of mourning Alvaro married Concha Moreno, a very nice and pretty girl from a neighboring town. Concha had no money or prospects either; but it really takes two to live on nothing a year.

The expenses of the wedding posed quite a problem, but fortunately Alvaro's Uncle Plutarco, although declining to further keep his sister's family from starving, thought well of wedding celebrations as such, and financed this one in a way quite suitable for a couple with an income of five thousand pesos a year. It also gave him an opportunity to talk for hours with the greatest force and animation, about nothing at all. This type of oratory was much favored by the elite of Cuyatlán and they could not have thought more of Don Plutarco if he had gotten his seat in congress by means of an actual election in which the votes had been actually counted.

The wedding left the young couple with much social prestige and virtually no funds. Their main asset now was the Guzmán home in Cuyatlán. Although two hundred years old this house was in prime condition and could be kept so indefinitely by making some minor repairs on the flat dirt roof and whitewashing the walls a few times in each generation. There was no running water, no electricity, no gas heating or telephone systems—all with their attendant expense. Garbage disposal was no problem because there was practically no garbage and also because there were a number of porcine garbage and sewage disposal units gruntingly patrolling the streets at all hours. There were no property taxes on the house and the municipal dues were as small as the benefits therefrom.

It was essential that the Guzmáns be dressed neatly in clothes of good quality, but Alvaro had an excellent suit left by his father and there was a fair chance that before it actually fell to pieces another relative in León or elsewhere would die and leave him another. His attire around the house was rather sketchy, mostly a blanket. Concha was able to make similar shifts, especially as the waves of fashion were quite flattened out before they reached Cuyatlán.

All this left the problem of eating, as you cannot eat nothing by the year. Fortunately the Guzmáns, like all provincial Mexicans of that era, could dine at a pinch, exclusively on corn tortillas, without losing either social standing or weight. Of course it was necessary to have a little lime to treat the corn kernels before grinding them, some charcoal for cooking and a little salt for seasoning. These were all produced locally at the lowest imaginable price and of the lowest

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New Sky-line along the Paseo de la Reforma.

Modern Architecture in Mexico

By Trent Elwood Sanford

IN 1929 an energetic salesman of the Tolteca Cement Company, with keen perception and enthusiasm and with some ideas of his own, put on a campaign of advertising to sell his product. In a series of articles appearing in a magazine put out by his company he expounded his theories of functionalism applied to building, and followed that with competitions in design and in photography. He was eminently successful. Since that time, Mexico has gone in for the use of reinforced concrete as a structural material with great fervor, as the "Poblanos," two hundred years earlier, had gone in for polychrome tile as a decorative material. Concrete has been poured by the thousands of barrels, especially in Mexico City. Some of the pouring has been well placed, in forms based on logical thinking and intelligent rejection of worn-out applications of ill-suited tradition; and some has been indiscriminately placed in forms based merely on unthinking architectural revolution.

During the Díaz regime, buildings had been erected in every style, including the Parisian Boulevard, the Venetian Gothic, and the Chinese; and after the unprecedented turbulence of the following ten years, Chapultepec Heights, Cuernavaca, Guadalajara, and Monterrey had blossomed forth with palatial imitations of Hollywood perversions of the Spanish; so it is not surprising that the Revolution with a capital "R" was eventually to include architecture. A movement toward so-called "functional" architecture had been started a few years before the Tolteca campaign. Its leader was José Villagrán García, whose first work of note, the Institute of Hygiene in 1925, caused something of a stir among architectural students who, the next year, were instrumental in getting Villagrán to teach at the National Academy. It is interesting that while among his pupils are some who have come into prominence by throwing to the winds all thoughts of form, proportion, and harmony, to treat building

construction entirely as a branch of engineering out of the handbooks, Villagrán, as architect for the Department of Public Health, continued to design simple and clean-cut structures based on sound architectural study.

In the beginning the movement had been slow to take hold, and it was not until Federico Sánchez Fongarty put on his campaign of cement advertising that architects joined the fight against prejudices of the conservatives to sprinkle the capital with "functionalism." But the clever advertising man had really started something. That same social and intellectual revolt that had brought forth the new ideas in architecture had made evident many needs neglected under the dictatorial Díaz regime. The problem was social; the answer structural; the problem a social need of schools, hospitals; and housing; the answer economical materials and methods of construction. The functional and architectural success of many of the schools and hospitals attests the social need and the correctness of the answer. The cost of schools previously built in a Neo-Colonial style had prohibited carrying out the extensive program of construction really needed.

But such an intellectual revolt has its dangers. They are evident in and around Mexico City. A movement of that kind is sure to have two kinds of followers: the one group, trained in tradition, recognizing that tradition is not the answer to expanding industry, new social and educational requirements, and new materials of construction, proceeding cautiously, through careful study, to find the answer; the other group (usually very young), knowing nothing of tradition and boasting of caring less, rushing in with all the answers ready-made. The architectural work of the first group is characterized by clarity of purpose and harmony of masses; the work of the second by either tricks or baldness. To the former, functional-

ism is misconstrued as a license for barrenness, or as a screen behind which lack of training or judgment should be permitted to hide. To that latter group reinforced concrete is a godsend, invented for the special purpose of covering up limited knowledge and absence of taste.

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Changes in architecture have been brought about by changing conditions and requirements, or new materials of construction, or sometimes by political or social dictatorship (in which last case it is usually either a decadent revival or a foreign importation); but no worth-while architecture has ever been the result of a sudden decision merely to do something "new" and different, for its own sake. The demand for an "American Style" is an old one, long antedating the vitriolic but capable Louis Sullivan, who with all his skill and all intolerance of eclecticism, was wise enough to insist that if he stuck to his principles, his adherents followed them, and an American style was the result, it would be brought about by evolution, not crusade. The first group mentioned above are evolutionists, the second, crusaders.

The evolution is still in process in Mexico (the crusaders are hard at work too!), though some fine results have already been achieved in industrial, commercial, and monumental work. In residential work, especially in the larger, single-family houses, they are far fewer. That will be discussed later. Of industrial work, outstandingly successful is the Tolteca Cement Plant at Mexico City, where the material manufactured by that company has been used to represent functionalism at its best. Of commercial structures, there are many recent store and office buildings in the modern style, especially on the Avenida Juárez facing the Alameda, some of which are reasonably successful, others, indulging in greater extremes of "Internationalism," notable chiefly for their incongruity in relation to adjacent older structures.

Of purely monumental structures, the Monument to General Alvaro Obregón, the result of a competition to commemorate the spot where that ex-president was assassinated, is a dignified and inspiring design. (We shall skip the long still-born Monument to the Revolution.) Architect of the Obregón Monument was Enrique Aragón Echegaray; and, working in collaboration with him, Ignacio Asúnsolo carved the large figures on the exterior of the monument to help produce a blend of architecture and sculpture all too rare in modern work in Mexico. From the standpoint of size, though it can hardly be called an architectural monument, the prize goes to the colossal statue on the island of Janitzio in Lake Pátzcuaro, designed by Guillermo Ruiz at the behest of General Cárdenas and completed in 1935. The full figure, heavy and squat, is taller than the Statue of Liberty in New York, and is of concrete covered with carved stone. Morelos, gazing upward to the sky, has his right hand uplifted, while his left holds the sword of justice, point to the ground. Due to the location of the colossal monument, at the top of a steep hill on a small island in the middle of the lake, its construction presented many difficulties. Unfortunately, they were not insurmountable.

In such buildings as hospitals and schools some of the greatest success has been achieved. The tremendous Main Hospital of the National Railways of Mexico, Carlos Greenham, architect, is one outstanding example; and the Central School of the Revolution, designed by Antonio Muñoz García, with a well-conceived plan on a monumental scale, combined with a simple dignified architectural treatment, is another. The latter occupies the site of a former prison, the infamous Cárcel de Belén (until the time of Juárez

that building had been a worthy asylum for indigent religious women); and the net result of the new group of buildings is the transformation of a formerly unsavory neighborhood into one not only of usefulness but of beauty.

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And even more recently, as an outgrowth of World War II and the demands associated with it, there has been a tremendous boom of building in the rapidly growing capital, including both public buildings and commercial structures; while the outlying areas are becoming very thoroughly sprinkled with factories, and with industrial suburbs to house the workers. War-time tax-exemption encouraged new industrial plants, and they are continuing to sprout.

Many of these buildings are highly creditable works of architecture; but others, quite obviously products purely of the engineering handbooks rather than of architectural study, are examples of the all too common modern misconception of functionalism as design necessarily devoid of all beauty, or even studied arrangement.

In connection with the modern architecture of no other country has the word "functional" been more abused than with that of Mexico. The stress put on "functionalism" as meaning a building necessarily stripped of all embellishment, or of attractive materials, and even studied proportions and massing, is, of course, a lot of nonsense. The carved and brilliantly colored Indian temple built on the top of a lofty truncated, sculptured pyramid was functional, whether or not one can now appreciate its function; and, in the eighteenth century, the richly carved and lavishly decorated Baroque church was functional. Its function was to serve as a fitting place for a blatantly materialistic and elaborately ceremonial worship of God. How could one indulge in that in a clean-shaven reinforced concrete warehouse? Whether or not one wants to do so now is beside the point; people did then, and the buildings express it. It is entirely conceivable that a hundred years from now, new materials and methods of construction will have rendered reinforced concrete obsolete and cement an almost forgotten product; in which case, in the years 2050, the Tolteca Cement Plant, which I have already praised, will have ceased to be a functional structure and will have become merely an example of the quaint way people had of building back in the early 1900's.

* * *

The same dangers, and the same results, have shown themselves in residential work, and to an even greater. The Architectural Revolution has struck that field with a vengeance. Certainly there was excuse for it. The hybrid designs, characterized by elaborate though meaningless ornamentation, where simplicity and good taste have been sacrificed to pretension, which overran the prosperous residential sections not so many years ago (and still are doing so to some extent) simply cried for a reversal. And how they are getting it! The newer parts of Mexico City and its suburbs are now being as rapidly overrun with "functional" houses. (Ardent "Reform" knows no compromise.)

Improvements in equipment have been a boon to the housekeeper, and intelligent planning has done much to dissipate the meaningless clutter of the Victorian Age (and the meaningless ornament of the hybrid designs); but the answer to modern living is not necessarily a revival of what used to be known as the Prairie School (a multitude of over emphasized horizontal or diagonal lines has nothing to do with func-

tionalism), nor the adopting from it of the Corbusier cracker-box, nor a hollow-tile wall waiting in vain for its nakedness to be covered. Almost better to have the hybrid designs.

Yet interestingly enough, where the recent domestic work in Mexico has been the most successful is in some of the workers' housing developments, which are of necessity the simplest kind of structures, and where requirements of the occupants (especially demands for intellectual expression) are of the simplest. Rigid economy has made impossible any modernistic "tricks" and a minimum plan has brought forth some excellent, straightforward results. Early leader in this kind of work was Juan Legarreta; some of his well-studied designs have been carried out with substantial success, and have been followed by other groups based on the same simplicity, devoid of tricks or forced accents. There are none of the exaggerated overhangs of the Prairie School; and there is nothing in common with the Corbusier cracker-box; there are no floating second-story rooms nor spiral stairways flaunting the fact they can float because modern handbooks permit concrete-filled cast iron columns and reinforcing rods to do circus stunts.

Thus it seems to have been that where economy demands the greatest exercise of intelligence and judgment the results have been the best. Where the problem becomes less strictly social, where in private work a less restricted pocketbook permits of whims, the principles of so-called "functional" design seem to fall apart and the work ceases to be modern and becomes "modernistic." Successful modern architecture is a logical answer to a problem; "modernistic" is the product of misguided whims.

One writer, in speaking of the "modern" house, says that it "is now more at home in Mexico City than in almost any city in the world." The writer was probably thinking chiefly of the quantity of such work there. There is so much that it cannot be overlooked. Some of it—a little of it—is excellent; more of it is mediocre; but most of it, either whimsical, or going to the other extreme and apparently done with engineering handbooks instead of careful thought and educated taste, is still pretty bad. It is not yet at home; it is lost and bewildered, trying to find its way out of a slough of misguided geometry. Unlike the fifty-year-old tall office building, the forty-year-old automobile factory, the thirty-year-old garage, and the ten or twenty-year-old industrial school, the age-old home cannot be turned upside down with one fell "yippee" of the young crusaders.

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What is the effect of this tide of architectural internationalism on the character of Mexico City; and how has it been received? There has, of course, been a storm of protest on the part of conservatives (reactionaries, perhaps), especially where an "International Style" building has gone up in the center of Mexico City. Conservative opposition for a time even put a halt to the Tolteca campaign by accusations of imperialist interests. The accusations were unfair and unjustified, but it does prove that Mexico City is not going all-out modern without a fight. The more reactionary of the opposition are urging a "native Mexican architecture," without a very clear picture of just what form it should take. More Neo-Colonial or pre-Cortés palaces would hardly meet present-day social needs; and as far as native Mexican architecture is concerned, the group houses just mentioned are excellent examples of native architecture translated into modern materials, built on a large scale for city needs. It is the trickery, or the nudity, of pseudo-functionalism in some of the larger houses and, more especial-

ly, the encroachment into the center of the old Colonial city of extreme examples of the International Style that have brought forth and deserved the protests. One of the most active of the modern group, who has a broad knowledge of Mexican architectural background, admits that the attacks leveled at them were merited, since they had been putting up buildings that might have been built anywhere in the world without due recognition of Mexican climate, materials, and the living habits of the people. Both sides in the battle have good arguments. Perhaps the most important considerations are: Where shall the experiments (they are still experiments) be conducted? and What recognition and support shall be given historical architecture?

We cannot today logically repeat the dreamy and intangible mysticism of the Medieval Period which produced the Gothic; nor do we want to repeat, if we could, the blatant materialism of a later day that produced the Baroque. If we are thought today to be materialistic, it is to be hoped that our materialism can be led into channels of greater scientific usefulness than in the extremes expressed in the decoration of the Baroque and Churrigueresque churches and palaces. Rich and fascinating as they are, they belong in history, to be cared for and cherished as important, historical, architectural documents—to be enjoyed, not repeated. But a ruthless contempt for all that is past (a popular pose today) is most unfortunate, and if not curbed is certain, in a more enlightened future, to be regretted.

The problem lies chiefly in Mexico City, substantially larger than the next dozen cities of Mexico put together, and still growing at the greatest rate of all. Industrial, commercial, and social needs there are great, and noble efforts are being made to meet them. Where modern work in Mexico City is being confined to outlying districts and to suburbs it is doubtless a worth-while architectural experiment and may eventually prove a much more efficient and happier achievement than the old work; but I should hate to see it encroach too much on the center of Mexico City, which has an historical character and an atmosphere not too common in this hemisphere.

While housing projects are being studied and experiments are being made, much of the old part of Mexico City is filled with fine old Colonial buildings turned into tenements. Much attention is needed there. I can recognize the economic handicaps as compared with a clean slate and new, inexpensive materials; but the old structures make up an architectural heritage to be envied. It should not be lightly discarded.

The problem has received attention in much smaller Taxco, and is now being recognized also in the fine old Colonial city of San Miguel Allende. What a shame it would be to replace the charm of those places with the greater efficiency of the strictly modern. It is quite evident that the appeal and popularity of Taxco and of San Miguel Allende are chiefly due to the distinction of their architectural character and historical associations. Other cities as yet less popular seem safe from too much "progress"; but as their accessibility and popularity increase, so will the danger. The completion of the Pan-American highway to the south worries me. I shudder to think of the possibility of the massive and decorative churches and palaces of pale green stone in Oaxaca being replaced by gaunt skeletons of concrete.

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The problem has long existed in cities that have a large share of architectural monuments, historical associations, and resultant charm. Though we are

more alert to their value today than formerly, mistakes are still made; and an over-enthusiasm for the International Style may result in further regrettable losses. The work of Comonfort in destroying the great monastery of San Francisco opened up new streets in the capital of Mexico; but the loss of the monastery was irremediable. Some civic surgical operations and face-liftings are necessary for reasons of sanitation. Some, for slum clearance, or for relief of congestion, are highly desirable. Others are merely thoughtless, ruthless. An example: In 1928 the quaintest, most picturesque spot in Paris—the twin-turreted end of the Cour du Dragon, near the Place St. Germain des Prés—was destroyed to make way for a “modern” apartment building which could have been built anywhere.

Mexico has two programs which show alertness to these dangers. One is that of the Department of Colonial Monuments, which has of recent years done good work in renovating churches and clearing them of parasitic excrescences which cheapen them and spoil their effect. They have also set aside certain historic monuments, which cannot be remodeled in such a way as to destroy their architectural and historical value. Here is an example of the kind of problem encountered. Behind the Iturbide Palace, which is in the very center of what is now the most valuable commercial district in Mexico City, was a rather useless interior property. This has been made productive by building a covered shopping center, running between the side streets and opening also from the monumental patio of the palace. This center has been built in the contemporary manner (it might be anywhere, of course), but not without a howl of protest from the “nationalists,” who would have liked to see it done in the Iturbide manner. To have done so would not only have been much more costly but would have been a rather far-fetched and unprofitable plagiarism. On the other hand, had it not been for the restraining influence of the Department of Colonial monuments, the Iturbide Palace might have been lost, which would have been worse.

The work, too, of Carlos Contreras, noted architect and city planner, and author of the Master Plan for the Federal District, calls for preservation of the “Monumental Traditional Zone,” the control of all building within that area, reduction instead of increase in the height of buildings, and the creation of civic centers where possible. The plan is admirable, but the spirit of it has not been strictly adhered to. Though some of them achieved with sacrifices, Mexico City is already the possessor of riches in boulevards, vistas, and parks. In addition to beautiful Chapultepec Park and the Paseo de la Reforma, it has both the Zócalo and the Alameda in the center of the busy city

and has made much of them; yet, where the Avenida Juárez ends, to become the Avenida Madero, a huge modern concrete skeleton has recently risen at the end of an attractive vista to hide, effectively and mercilessly, the most colorful Colonial house in the country.

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If I am accused of being a sentimentalist I can only think of the conquistadores in their fanatical religious zeal tearing down Tenochtitlán to build Mexico City and what we would not now give to have had Mexico City built just a little way off in any direction in order to have Tenochtitlán intact; of the ambitious clergy tearing down the early Gothic churches to replace them with the more fashionable Baroque and Churrigueresque structures; of Talsa and his ilk in their fanatical rage for Churrigueresque extermination tearing down the high altar in the Cathedral of Mexico City and Pseudo-Classic monsters; of the revolutionists, both sides, stripping the churches further to melt down their silver for funds to fight for causes which they did not fully understand; of agnostic reformers cutting streets through beautiful monasteries because the Catholic Church in times past had been selfish with its power; of a religious sect which was not Catholic cutting away and destroying sculptured saints from a church front because their particular sect was in the habit of worshipping before an organ instead of an altar; and of the charming little three-arched stone bridge which leads among great trees and organ cacti to San Agustín Acolman within the last few years hidden behind a modern concrete lintel bridge which carries a wide road on which there is almost no traffic.

We could have had them all. Or could we? Architecture marches on. But does it always move wisely?

Mexico, go ahead with your experiments in social improvement which are sorely needed, and the architectural experiments that are necessary to go with them; but so far as possible keep them out in the open fields under the brilliant blue and fleecy clouds with which your country is so richly blessed. Do not crowd them into the city and in so doing destroy the wealth of an architectural background compared to which most countries are poor. Reinforced concrete is all right in its place; but not every city can boast of tezontle. Colonial palaces and Colonial churches may seem an economic embarrassment; but they are a fund of fascinating riches that we, in the United States, can only wish we had, but never will have.



City with a Secret

By Angelica Mendoza

IT SEEMS as if time had come to a halt in Puebla de los Angeles, of all Mexican cities the one that is fondest—indeed, it is jealous—of its colonial traditions. Despite its mestizo inhabitants, it has the air of a Gothic city. In the hand-carved halls of its old mansions you can hear the vague murmur of antiquity. For hundreds of years the gilt-edged books that fill the shelves and cases of Bishop Juan Palafox's library have lain untouched. A breath of antiquity blows across the city's stone-paved patios and corridors, bright with the colored tiles that are the masterpiece of local artisans. A certain mystery hangs over the shadowed arches, and a sleeping peace issues from all the doorways. For this city that modestly displays its beauty also has its secrets.

You reach Puebla—eighty-four miles southeast of Mexico City—over a road that has a somewhat desolate beauty. Along the plateaus and the mountain slopes runs a greenish-black band of pine groves; below, in the valley, you can make out villages and cities; above, the transparent light of a clean, high sky. And church towers and cupolas appear everywhere, first by the dozens, then by the hundreds, suggesting an immemorial landscape in the Holy Land.

In neighboring Cholula the church-flecked horizon gives the traveler a feeling of stupor. The presence of so many places of worship in such a small area expresses a determined will to deny existence, a manifest desire to assure one's place in the next world at the cost of life in this one. Airplanes fly overhead, and the procession of buses and automobiles along the highway is almost uninterrupted.

Puebla de los Angeles does not disappoint the tra-

veler. It is quiet and manorial, with an aroma of piety and refinement. In the cloisters of the university one can almost hear the scholastic debates above the clamor of today's ardent political quarrels. For these Mexican cities that seem so tranquil and pacified by religion provide a setting for violent passion in politics and love. Boredom, intolerance, and the enemies of the active life are bred in apparently soporific Puebla. In such a withdrawn environment, the sins of the flesh can be pardoned; but those of thought find only repudiation and the unquenchable flames of the inferno.

The city's basic craft—the manufacture of tiles—has made it famous. Tile is the universal watchword of all its elegant architecture and ornamentation. It is also a source of charm and color, for it has been wisely used, so that we never tire of its ingenuous and imaginative designs. We could say that the Puebla tiles represent the most successful example of mestizo craftsmanship in America, combining Mediterranean European tradition with Indian intuition. But the city and its surroundings reveal other mestizo art forms; there we find the richest, most opulent native baroque with a grandeur and lavishness unmatched elsewhere in America.

In the Rosary Chapel of the Church of Santo Domingo, which was opened to the people about 1690, the baroque displayed a beauty of style and prodigality of forms that served as an inspiration and model for all subsequent baroque in Mexico. It bursts out in a flood of gold, retables, statues, and walls; in the midst of a lively forest of boughs, leaves, fruits, and birds rises the face of an angel or the head of a saint



or a pope. But in the labyrinth of forms and extravagance of decorative motifs, dominated by curved lines, there is nevertheless a preestablished harmony. The columns, arches, and vaults are planned with mathematical precision. Space does not exist, for it is resolved and immobilized by the multiplicity feeling of oppression, for its penetrating Oriental quality imprisons the imagination. In this expression of art there is no room for dissidence; it is the esthetic language of an elaborate way of life, based on extravagance. But in Puebla's baroque we also find a thoroughly Mexican note: the hand of the Indian is evident in the variety of coloring, in the exuberance of the floral motifs, and above all in the portrayal of human and celestial figures. This combination of the Hispanic elements of religious faith and ritual with the fantastic and intuitive quality of the Indian gave Mexican baroque its national character. Mexico's independence began in art before the wars for liberation.

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All this can be seen in the ingenuousness of the Indian statuary in the church of Santa María de Tomanzintla, in the polychrome facade of San Francisco de Ecatepec, and in the fantastic combination of reds and whites in the towers of the Sanctuary of Ocotlán. Even in the Puebla Cathedral, an opulent Renaissance work, the touch of the native hand shows up in the tile work of the towers and in the wood carvings. Both in the tiles and in the decoration of retables we find the favorite colors of the anonymous pre-Hispanic artists: the greens of tropical foliage, the reds of fire and sacrificial blood, the yellow of father sun, and the blue of the sky, the abode of the stars. Through the baroque, the mestizo and Indian people of the colony expressed their aspirations, their complaints, their dreams; what they could not put into words or action dissolved into a multitude of symbols. The materials used in the Puebla baroque also came from the American land; centuries before the churches and viceregal palaces were built, marble and stone had served to express ancient Mexican art's feeling for space and volume.

The sight of the Sanctuary of Ocotlán, erected on a height and surrounded by a dwarfed settlement, is a shock. It is so neat and perfect that it seems as if the artists and workmen had finished their job only yesterday. The pure white of the facade contrasts sharply with the red of the towers; white reappears in the cupolas that end in crosses typical of Mexico's excellent iron work. Within the church you feel the glory reflected in the abundance of whites and golds, the intricate retables and altars, and the fabulous vision of the main altar and the chapel of the Virgin Mary. Outside, on the stone-paved terrace, familiar figures of the Mexican scene make the landscape human and real—a woman wrapped in her shawl, a bare-foot boy playing, and nearby a farmer dressed in white, with a beribboned sombrero, accompanied by his burro. At the sanctuary's feet lies the humble village, its adobe houses painted a faded rose. The sharp-stoned streets are enlivened by children's voices, and the pealing of the bells fills the air.

Puebla de los Angeles is a city that resents innovations. In the midst of manorial houses showing obvious signs of daily living stands the absurdly fragile and extravagantly ornamented "Almond Paste House" (Casa del Alfeñique). A few blocks from this masterpiece of colonial decoration the Cathedral raises its Renaissance bulk in the severity of a more rational style. Its two towers are similar to those of the Escorial monastery and palace near Madrid, and their cupolas are crowned in a brilliant display of red and yellow tiles. Three doorways topped by semicircular

arches lead to its three naves. Inside follow rows of Doric pilasters and Ionic and Corinthian columns. Prodigious rich figures cover the altars. The choir is unique in design, of colored woods beautifully carved in Moorish style. Outside, an iron grating of subtle and elaborate design surrounds the stone terrace. Three kings ruled in turn over Spain's imperial domains while the Cathedral was going up: Philip II, Philip III, and Philip IV. Six architects conceived the plan: Juan de Herrera (the architect of the Escorial), Juan Gómez de Mora, Francisco de Becerra, Pedro Muñoz, Miguel Vallejo, and José Manso. Actual construction took generations—from 1562 to 1649.

Weighted with centuries and the nobility things achieve in the service of a universal idea, the Cathedral dominates the middle of the city. Unchanged by Mexico's tragedy during the thirty years of the Porfirio Díaz dictatorship, it did not notice the revolutionary hurricane that shook the country from 1910 to 1920. But close by the Cathedral, in an old colonial house, Aquiles Serdán and his family began the armed revolution on November 18, 1910.

A sunny afternoon and stimulating air make you want to seek out new, unknown experiences. Visiting the Museum of Santa Monica, a former convent, seems an appropriate way of reviving spirits exhausted by the baroque of the churches. The entrance to the museum has the appearance of one more of the old family houses that line Puebla's streets. People in their best clothes await their turn in the little vestibule. Someone invites the visitors to come in, and directs them to a small room containing primitive Mexican oil paintings and colonial furniture. After a few sibylline words, the curator points to a small door, rising no more than a yard from the floor, behind a china cupboard. The visitors pass through, doubled over until they are virtually on all fours, and emerge on a series of dark passage-ways. From this moment on, impressions are violent and unexpected, creating an air of tension.

A narrow circular stairway leads to a high, dilapidated hall that receives light through a few small apertures facing the street. There is nothing special about it, until you discover a dense latticework grid. Attracted by this detail, you draw closer. Looking downward through this marvelous barrier, you see the inside of a church with altar and retables. The gold of the statuary casts pale reflections, and the murmur of prayers rises faintly to your ears. Here, hidden by the lattice, generations of nuns secretly watched public religious services behind the back of the law. For after 1857, when the famous Reform Laws went into effect, the convent of Santa Monica existed illegally.

When you reach a room in the convent used by the nuns for wakes when members of their community died, horror adds to the feeling of mystery. Here the wrinkled and blackened heart of a famous bishop and orator is preserved in a bottle. There is something depressingly cruel and primitive about the relic. It makes you think, by way of contrast, of an Aztec youth, centuries ago, climbing the Pyramid of the Sun to give his heart in sacrifice. That gesture had a certain barbaric grandeur that is lacking in the preservation of this Christian relic. Below, the doors of the cells open on a corridor running along a wide patio, green with plants. The ascetic atmosphere of the cell where the Mother Superior lived is accentuated by the emptiness of the room and the presence of an oil painting of Santa Monica. The cells of the nuns follow in line, and then, separated from these, those of the novices. In all you see flat wooden beds with hard pillows and no comforts. Rosaries and scapularies hang here and there. Austerity and monotony must have gone hand in hand during the long years of confinement.

* * *

The convent had its own chapel. You reach it through a corridor with whitewashed walls, on which hang sacred ornaments, prelates' cloaks, habits, and the hair shirts and tortures, the nail-tipped whips and the crowns of thorns, with which the nuns reminded their flesh of its essentially sinful and unworthy character. Then the chapel, with a pale, bleeding Christ on his cross in the subdued light admitted by a little window. The patio's flowering plants and the vine-covered well make a strangely idyllic setting. In years past, the echo of the songs and motets of the month of Mary and the lamentations of the *De Profundis* were contained within the walls of the patio, submerged in the silence of the protecting houses that surround the convent, shutting it out from the streets.

The crude realities of a century of Mexican history did not enter this home of withdrawal and peace. The iron hand of Benito Juárez had closed the convents, and the clergy's property had been transferred to the nation. The public wearing of habits was forbidden, and the monks and nuns had to return to the active life of society. Devout Puebla de los Angeles protected the rebels who defied the new laws, and, contrary to the will of the new nation, the nuns continued their habitual life, making beautiful lace, embroidery, and confections. But in the valleys and fields of Mexico the people carried on the unfinished work of the revolution for independence.

Benito Juárez, symbol of the fortitude of his Indian race and of the will of his people, called the country to arms to defend it against the foreign invaders. From 1859 to 1872 this tireless man lived the drama of Mexico, carrying the burden of government on his shoulders. From Oaxaca, his birthplace in the south, to Saltillo on the northern frontier, this austere statesman fought alongside his men every inch of the way. Once he escaped by a miracle from the hands of Maximilian's "Hessian" cavalry. Though defeated and pursued, he did not lose contact with his people, and when the time came for the reconquest he returned

from north to south, conquering in his turn, until he could pause to do justice with the execution of Maximilian. The war and its depredations passed; the French adventure was consigned to the attic of history; and Juárez, reelected by his people, began his second period of government. But he died suddenly in 1872, his heart worn out by a strenuous life. Withal, the convent of Santa Monica did not change its ritual. What importance did the events of dramatic history hold for the lives of the nuns meditating upon the sweetness of heaven?

After Juárez came thirty years of domination by the cruel, pompous dictator, Porfirio Díaz. On Mexico City's Alameda the people were shoved aside with gun butts to make way for the aristocracy. One morning the people awoke to the crack of a rifle. In a Puebla house the armed revolution of 1910 began, but still the convent did not interrupt its routine. It flourished piously and securely, protected from the law by its friends. Díaz fell and Madero came on the scene. Then treachery swept away Madero and his ideals. In the north Pancho Villa and his followers widened the front of the civil war. From Morelos the voice of the man of the land was heard and, under the slogan "Land and Liberty," the Zapatistas and their caudillo showed Mexico the road to reconstruction. History galloped by the convent when Carranza's defeated hosts dispersed. But the convent slept on, and the relic in its bottle became formless.

One day in 1935 the mystery was unexpectedly unveiled. A generation that had breathed the air of a new day denounced the existence of the convent and its open violation of the Reform Laws, shocking the faithful. When the police reached the scene, the nuns disappeared into the neighboring houses. The cells, the patio, and the chapel remained empty. In the high room the relic of the bishop was exposed to the curiosity of outsiders. Huddled in silence, Puebla de los Angeles followed the rhythm of history, and, reconciled with the new order, spread out its beauties while the episode of the convent passed to the sphere of myth and legend.

Woman with a Sunflower

by George H. Moore

I N her terra cotta hand
 The green stem smelled of Asian spice
 The brilliant yellow petals were
 A necromancer's rare device
 To bring back Clytie's tresses from
 The sea of misbegotten time
 Out of the blue Aegean mists
 To a more habitable clime
 Of patient rains and careless winds—
 Which, resting firmly in her hand
 Luminously waited for
 Her smiling lips to understand.



SUBURB OF COYOACÁN. Oil.

By Sarah Jimenez Vernis.

Among our Younger Painters

By Guillermo Rivas

THE painting "Street in Coyoacán," by Manuel Pastrana, reproduced in color on the cover of this magazine, as well as those which illustrate this article, form part of a collective exhibition of works by young Mexican artists offered at this time by the new art exhibit galleries, "Sala Velazquez."

It is a highly stimulating and rewarding experience to view the paintings of these young artists, most of whom have never before exhibited in public, an experience which renews one's faith in the innate unebbing vitality of Mexican art. For this voluminous and varied exhibit reveals that our art represents a continuous process of rebirth, of new strivings and explorations, that our plastic expression is in no danger of decline because of the constant emergence of new and clearly promising talents.

It is gratifying to note in the assembled works that in this era of negation, of aesthetic dissolution and flux, our younger painters are still mainly concerned with sound craft as the basis of good art. Nearly all of them evince an earnest preoccupation with form, with color and line, with the mastery of fundamentals, the objective terms whereby a subjective utterance may be achieved. And in almost every case there is a visible endeavour to surpass mere decoration or art per se.

Landscapes, as one would readily expect, predominate in this show. But by and large they are not mere graphic depictions of pictorial countryside. The

theme—as in "Ahuehuetes" by Alberto Juárez Zúñiga, "Suburbs of Coyoacán" by Sarah Jimenez Vernis, or "Corner in Churubusco" by Clara Luz Rodríguez—usually serves as the means for fine compositional imagery and color arrangement. This condition stands out even more conspicuously in the "Sylvan Composition" by Carlos García Dueñas.

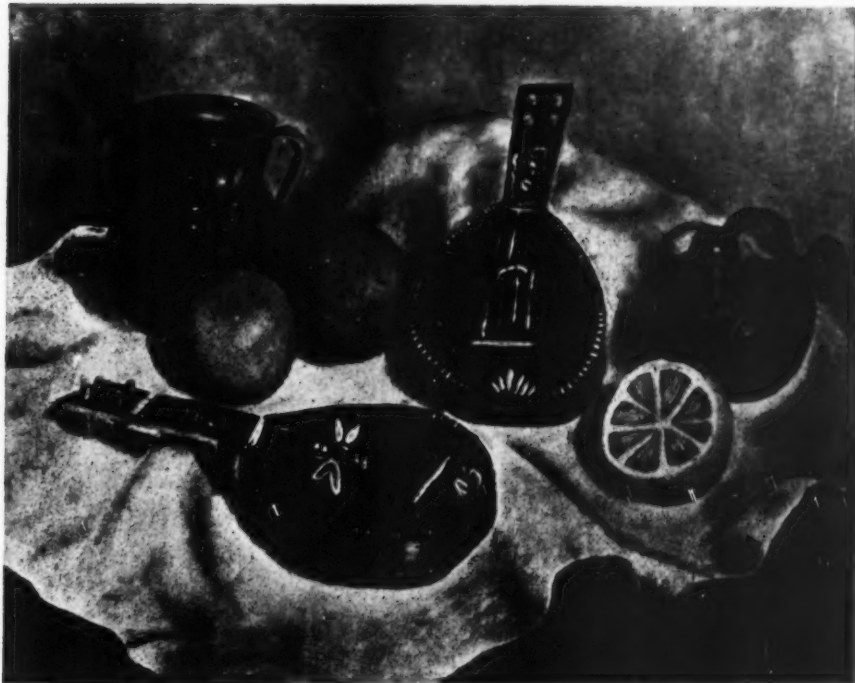
It is in the figure and portrait studies included in this show that one notes a more pronounced trace of modern Mexican influence, a suggestion of Anguiano or Zalee in "The Boy of Coval," by Pedro Banda, or of the earlier works by Rodríguez Lozano in "The Punished Child" by Eva Zepeda García.

There is, however, a more sharply asserted note of independence in the truly fine portrait, "Girl with a Ribbon," by Carolina Blanco. The tonal quality of this painting, soft and diaphanous, and the lifelike facial expression which is decidedly removed from photographic likeness, lend this work a stamp of true distinction.

A dominant striving for originality is also notable in the lyrical symbolism of "Leda" by Aima Karvajai; while the humanism of our mural era is defined in the dramatic and quite elaborately developed theme of "The Chieftain's Son" by José Antonio Araujo Rojo.

In its aggregate, the widely representative exhibition at the Sala Velazquez presents a vivid testimony of early fulfillment as well as a prospective panorama of future trends in native art.

AHUEHUETES. Oil.
By Alberto Juarez Zuñiga.



STILL LIFE. Oil.
By Juan Nuñez Nuñez.

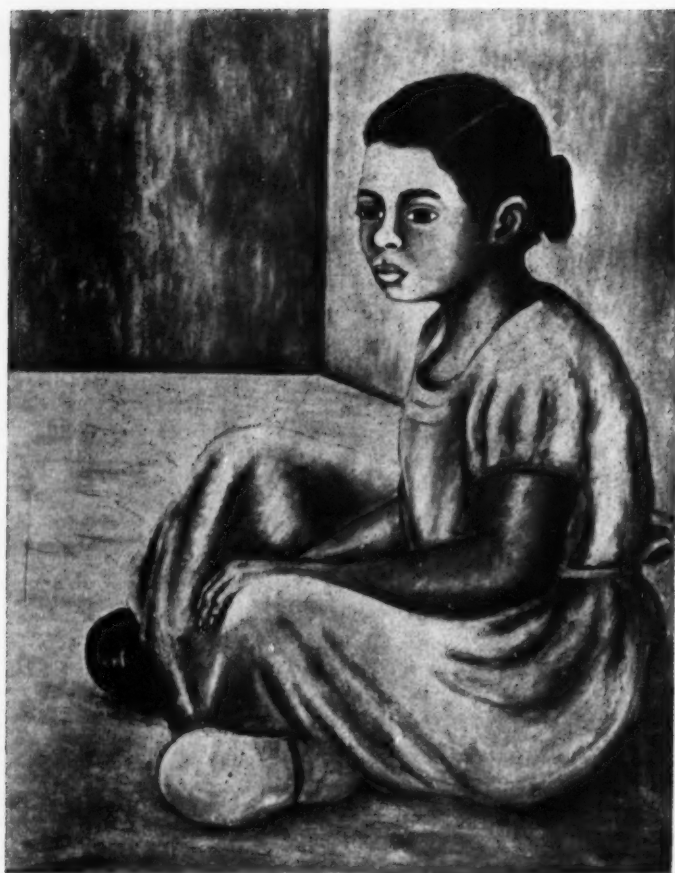
FROM THE SEA. Oil.
By Carlos García Dueñas





BOY OF COVAL. OIL.

By Pedro Banda.



THE PUNISHED CHILD. OIL.

By Eva Zepeda García.



LANDSCAPE AT PEDREGAL. OIL.

By Alberto Juarez Zuñiga.

Un Poco de Todo

BIOMECHANICS THROWS NEW LIGHT ON EVOLUTION OF MAN

THE vast literature on the evolution of man deals largely with the transformation of four-footed into two-footed mammals. In his newly published book "Human Locomotion and Bodily Form" (Williams and Wilkins) Dr. Dudley J. Morton, a distinguished orthopedist of New York, approaches the subject from the entirely new standpoint of "biomechanics," as he calls it, which means that man adapted himself structurally in the Darwinian sense to the laws of mechanics and gravity.

Engineers have looked man over and pointed out that his arms have ball-and-socket joints, that his spine is admirably designed to support loads, that as clutching instruments his hands have no equal. But this is mere description. How did man acquire what engineers and biologists describe? Because he has a new and provocative answer to this old question, Dr. Norton's book is important.

Biomechanics is concerned with the relation of locomotion to gravity. As he considers man in this light Dr. Morton is struck by a structure which has a skeleton and muscles admirably designed for locomotion. In all animals with a backbone this relation of structural design and mechanical function is evident, but the relation reaches its pinnacle in man because his movements and his thinking go together, especially the movement of his hands. It is hard to say whether man's brain would be what it is were it not for his skill in handling tools or whether his handling of tools is the consequence of the brain's evolution.

When fins turned into legs, gravity came into play. There are fossils enough to indicate how numerous and remarkable were nature's experiments with legs that could both move and support the body. Apes were good at moving along by swinging from branch to branch, but they were not so good at moving on the ground on all fours. It took millions of years of experimenting before man was evolved, the only mammal that walks on two feet.

* * *

That there is a direct relation between our structural design and our mechanical functions is shown by the furniture in our houses and the tools that we make and use. Man "got that way," as Main Street would say, both by mutation and adaptation.

Mutation means that from time to time man's structure departed slightly yet significantly and usefully from that of the species. Two-headed calves are mutations, and like all mutations they breed true. Albinos are mutations.

Adaptation in the Darwinian sense is a term that explains itself. Some insects have a bad taste and are therefore avoided by predacious birds. Butterflies have assumed the shape and color of leaves to protect themselves against their enemies. There are thousands of cases. Man is as good at adaptation as any creature that ever lived.

Mutation and adaptation go hand in hand. If a mutant cannot adapt itself to its environment nature kills it off. Such monsters as the legless animals that are occasionally born have no chance in the struggle for survival. The mutation is too great. Always the mutation must be slight if there is to be adaptation. Man mutated like other animals. In his case his principal task when he mutated was adaptation to gravi-

ty and the laws of mechanics, according to Dr. Morton.

In adapting himself to bodily changes brought about by mutation, man held his head high and balanced it vertically and made the most of his extraordinary mobile and strong arms and hands. Dr. Morton sees also evidence of adaptation in man's hidden, deeply seated pelvis, in his extended hips, in his straightened knees and stout lower legs, in feet which support his body vertically and which are specifically adapted for walking on the ground. Human feet are the result of a departure from some ancestral man-ape who swung himself from tree to tree, holds Dr. Morton. In such a man-ape the weight must be carried entirely by the arms, which means that a horizontal four-footed animal was stretched out vertically, legs included.

Before man came along, there was an intermediate creature, as the fossil record shows. As the result of adaptation to gravity this creature came down from the trees and walked upright on his two feet. After that there was more adaptive remodeling of the legs and of the body so that two-footed walking and running became easier. The arms no longer served any purpose in locomotion yet lost nothing in mobility and strength.

We move our feet voluntarily yet almost automatically, in the sense that we hardly give them a thought when we walk. Feet are intimately associated with the spinal nerves, hands with the higher brain centers. That is why feet and hands are so different both in structure and function. It is Dr. Morton's contention that the brain was able to develop because hands were thus freed from locomotion. That is how man became a hewer of wood, a digger, a quarrier of stone, a miner—in short, a tool-user. To prove his point Dr. Morton points to the anthropoid apes. The brain of man and the chimpanzee came from the same ancestral type, but the hands of the chimpanzee and his relatives were never separated from locomotion.

As Dr. Morton sees it, the interaction between locomotor structures and gravity made man what he is.

FIRST MEN IN AMERICA

Folsom man, so called because of the place where his relics were found, was not the first inhabitant of this continent. Prof. Alexander D. Krieger told a joint meeting of the Society for American Archeology and the Central States Anthropological Society at the University of Illinois last month. He said that man had been in America for more than 15,000 years.

The evidence consists of spear points known as "Clovis fluted" from the site in New Mexico where first they were found—almost always with remains of mammoths.

Folsom points are found principally in the Great Plains and in association with an extinct form of buffalo. Professor Krieger maintains that the human beings who made Folsom points, far from being the oldest in America, were preceded by several thousand years by Clovis spear-point makers who were hunters of mammoths. No Clovis fluted points have been found anywhere in Asia, yet they are relatively numerous in North America. Apparently the points were invented after man had settled in America.

Literary Appraisals

THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO, By Howard F. Cline. Introduction by Donald C. McKay. 452 pp. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

GOD has made us neighbors, let justice make us friends," said Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan more than a quarter-century ago. Mexico is more than a neighbor. It is the threshold to another world, the immediate and, consequently, the most important link in the chain that joins the United States and Latin America. The need for cordial relations between the two was never greater. Fortunately, the feeling of injustice sensed by Secretary Bryan has after half a century of uneasy relations given way to frank cordiality.

This book by Howard Cline, director of the Hispanic Foundation of the Library of Congress, is not a study of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries. It is rather a compact, yet lucid, summary of the diverse elements that make our neighbor to the south not one but many Mexicos—of how ever since prehistoric times peoples and ideas have constantly been crossing and recrossing the real or artificial boundary of the two, and of how significant this mutual interchange has been. It is an attempt to explain the curious composite that is Mexico today.

Upon the sympathetically drawn background of the forces and factors that have molded Mexico and its people from the days of Montezuma to the strongman rule of Diaz, the author sketches with deft strokes and genuine feelings the epic drama of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. He traces the gropings of a people determined to smash the ancient legacies and modern heritages, to sweep away all barriers to the attainment of social justice and public welfare, be they foreign capital, church domination, labor control, or political absolutism.

He portrays the mounting wave of nationalism that made Carranza an enigma and so fervently supported Cárdenas in the daring blow dealt the oil companies, symbols of foreign exploitation.

* * *

The turgid years of violent change with Huerta, Carranza, Villa and Zapata, and the promulgation of the socially inspired Constitution of 1917 are covered with objectivity. So are the years of the constitution's implementation in the face of dogged protest at home and abroad. The story of the great crusade of the people of Mexico for the assertion of human rights and the dignity of man in a world rent by social strife and conflicting ideologies is well rendered. Incidents and personalities are presented impartially. Through it all runs the slow and painful growth of democracy. "Sufragio libre y no reelección" (effective suffrage and no re-election) at last becomes more than a slogan.

The author presents many events as phases in the great drama that has raised Mexico to a new position of leadership in Latin America. These include the resurgence of nationalism and its clash with growing internationalism, World War II and the role of Mexico in helping to fuse the Western Hemisphere into a solid phalanx. Also the subsequent era of good feeling and post-war economic reorganization, and the institutionalized revolution that is attempting to consolidate the social, economic and political gains of almost half a century of sacrifice and conflict.

* * *

Mexico's position of leadership has given her people a sense of security and brought her closer to the United States in spite of inevitable irritations. Mr. Cline points out that "Mexico and the United States are interacting more vigorously, more extensively than at any earlier time. But, unlike some previous epochs, contacts are friendly, cordial and largely routine."

In the end the author concludes that if relations between the United States and Mexico were uneasy during the first half of the troubled twentieth century, it was because of the predominant attitudes in both lands. Angry passion and recriminations, suspicion and fears have at last given way to genuine understanding. The Good Neighbor Policy was undoubtedly a start toward readjustment, but it took the strain and stress of World War II to bring about conciliation and compromise through cooperation in a common cause.

C. C.

MEXICO AND I. By Amy Prouty. Illustrated with Photographs. 258 pp. Philadelphia: Dorrance and Co.

THIS is a somewhat tardy review of a most timely and rewarding book, the record of a Mexican sojourn by an avid and observant visitor, an open-minded and warm-hearted and highly personal record of an explorer who retraced our pictorial byways largely on her own, without the aid of guidebooks, and which, nevertheless, might serve as a very helpful guidebook for others who might venture in the author's wake.

In "Mexico and I," strictly speaking, Amy Prouty does not disclose a new or unknown terrain. The places the author describes comprise the more or less standard tourist itinerary. It is her fresh and personal approach to such places, and her friendly responsiveness to all casual experience that makes this book delightfully readable.

With wise discretion the author does not attempt analysis or interpretation of social, economic or political issues. But all these are broadly implicit in her wayside description. The panorama she has drawn projects a human portrait. Her picture of Mexico is of the land and the people, and it is a picture brushed with a highly vivid palette.

In its essence, the book is a clarification of the prejudices and misconceptions which, unfortunately, are so often harbored by visitors from the North. It describes the author's progress from a rather doubtful and timorous approach to subsequent sympathy and understanding—to an enduring affection for Mexico achieved through wide personal contact. And the fact that the book stimulates such progress in the minds of its readers defines its salient value.

The supplement of highly appropriate photographs lends "Mexico and I" an added distinction.

H. S. P.

BEYOND THE GREAT FOREST. By Virginia Prevett. 302 pp. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

THE forest in the title refers to virgin territory in the interior of Brazil, but the author, before she is through, explains that it also stands for the wilderness of emotions through which she progressed before she found contentment. The forest is also the wall of non-comprehension that separates the United States from other peoples of the world.

Virginia Prewett was in Argentina for The Chicago Sun when Perón came to power. Then in 1947 The Sun did away with Latin-American coverage, and shortly thereafter she made the dramatic decision to establish a 500-acre homestead in Brazil's primitive state of Goiás. Her book is an intensely personal account of her experiences, her frustrations, anguish and disappointments. Subjective, introspective and full of involved rationalizations, it goes into almost painful details about the author's battle with herself, which she says she won, and the struggle with the forest, which she lost. Nevertheless, the wild beauty of the countryside comes alive, and the people are made real.

The portion on Argentina draws a good many conclusions which are, to say the least, debatable. Miss Prewett, for instance, gives as one of her reasons for going into the wilderness her conviction that the American press corps in Argentina had sold out; all its members except herself showed willingness to go along with a suggestion put forward by the United States Embassy in hopes of obtaining an interview with Perón: there were to be no questions about freedom of the press. What she missed completely, her book shows, was the correspondents' freedom to report that very condition as part of the story. (As a matter of fact, the group interview never came off.)

Furthermore, she made a great to-do then, and in her book now, about needing permission from her paper to attend such a conference, a condition which has never ceased to puzzle the other reporters. More than half of them had served as war correspondents in Europe or Asia and they felt their employer's by that time had faith in their own judgment on when and when not to attend an interview.

Miss Prewett is at her best in writing about herself. Threaded through her story is a most appealing account of her romance with the always devoted and quietly capable Bill Mizelle who, as her husband, drew the end-paper maps that help the reader immeasurably to follow the adventure in Brazil.

V. L. W.

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PAN-AMERICANISM AND DEMOCRACY, by Luis Quintanilla, Ambassador of Mexico, published by Boston University Press, 685 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston.

DOES the principle of non-intervention forbid the American states from undertaking collective intervention against an American government guilty of trampling upon human rights or engaging in anti-democratic practices? Luis Quintanilla, Mexican ambassador to the Organization of American States (Pan-American Union) and author of the best-seller of 1943, "A Latin-American Speaks," takes up this thorny problem in a new booklet issued by the Boston University Press, "Pan-Americanism and Democracy." He answers an emphatic, "No." Whatever the dangers of permitting such practices to continue, the only safe long-term basis for the Organization of American States must be complete non-interference in the internal affairs of its members.

Quintanilla reaches his conclusion through a long examination of the meaning of democracy, some of the most interesting pages. He lists thirty concrete examples of transgression against democratic principles currently encountered "separately or jointly and to a lesser or greater degree, in all of the twenty-one American republics." Yet Quintanilla is no pessimist.

"...democracy is optimistic... for it is, above all, reasonable and rational. It is dazzled by the delusive glamour of aggression. The secret of its strength is, paradoxically, the strength of its mildness." The aims of democracy are to be reached by unity in diversity not by a slavish uniformity; and here Quintanilla finds the essence of the Inter-American principle.

In a last chapter of suggestions for immediate action to safeguard human rights in the Americas, Quintanilla urges formation of an Inter-American League for the Protection of Human Rights, to be composed of private organizations and citizens, with national leagues to be set up in each country. The Inter-Ame-

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rican League could mobilize public opinion and act as a public conscience without infringing upon the American principle that each country is sovereign on its own territory. The book is, as Alberto Lleras, Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, declares in a thoughtful foreword, "an exceedingly useful contribution for the deliberations of the Tenth-American Conference at Caracas, in 1953."

"Pan-Americanism and Democracy" is the first of a series of Inter-American Monographs sponsored by the Department of Latin-American Regional Studies in the Graduate School of Boston University, which has already distinguished itself by its remarkable and socially useful program of studies. The series aims at publishing inexpensively and quickly, before they are out-of-date, descriptive and analytical materials of both specialized and broad interest on contemporary Latin America. The first of the series sets a high standard.

W. B.

HAVANA, The Portrait of a City By W. Adolphe Roberts. Illustrated. 282 pp New York: Coward Mc- ann

EVEN though Havana is not Paris by a long jai-alai shot, it is a very exciting city and one better understood by the casual visitor who brings with him some knowledge of the Cuban capital's history. Unfortunately, most Yanquis come to Cuba with no more background than a ready leer for the night-life they read about in the travel brochures, the remembered fragrance of a good Havana cigar.

Mr. Roberts, a journeyman producer of biography, history, novels and travel books and verse, calls his latest work "The Portrait of a City." He is an avowed aficionado of Havana, but he has not retouched his portrait; the wrinkles and the double chin are there for all to see, but so are the charm and the glamour. Not all Cubans and not all of Cuba's political parties will delight in the sharply drawn thumbnail sketches of the political shenanigans and the procession of leaders and rulers, under the Spaniards, under the United States protectorate and since the

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independence of the republic, which began only in 1902.

This is not a historian's history, nor is the tourist part of the portrait a true guidebook, which the author carefully notes is not his goal. It is a friendly, casual, often kind of journalese account of a strange yet friendly city. After the history, the tourist will find a comprehensive enough report on Havana's people, their customs, the shopping, the sight-seeing, the night life, the daytime virtues and the after-dark vices to help him on his way and keep him out of illicit mischief.

If Mr. Roberts' Cuba and his writing are not Ernest Hemingway's it is nearer to the real thing than the painted señorita who waves her teeth and maracas at you from the travel agency posters. His book will make a good companion on that five-hour non-stop flight to Havana and it will help speed the anticipatory hours on the Havana-bound cruise boat.

P. J. C. F.

INDIAN TALES. By Jaime de Angulo. Illustrated by the author. With a foreword by Carl Cermer. 246 pp. New York: A. A. Wyn.

FOLK tales, American Indian or other, usually bore me stiff, and mention of a book entitled, baldly, "Indian Tales", would induce a feeling of depression. Yet Jaime de Angulo's "Indian Tales" has enchanted me. It brings to mind "The Wind in the Willows", although it is more often frankly funny than that masterpiece. It is a book that causes the reader to laugh aloud or exclaim his delight.

* * *



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"Indian Tales" presents a string of incidents that occur during the travels of a single family — incidents in a world combining the qualities of Oz with those of the world in which Mr. Rat and Mr. Mole adventured. Only excessively long quotations could give a just idea of the book's humor and charm. One can do no more than assert that they are there.

Mr. de Angulo put this book in final form as he was dying of cancer, but you would never know this, for his book is filled with sunlight. He did not merely compile Indian tales. He took the characters and mood of a certain group of tales and more important myths and built a casual, happy story with allegorical overtones. The whole is anything but primitive.

* * *

The author owes a debt to the California Indians, whose material he took over, and they owe a debt to him. What virtues folk stories have are usually masked by a complex frame of reference entirely unlike ours, and unknown to us. Mr. de Angulo penetrated the minds of his Indian friends in a way that very few ethnologists and almost no collectors of folkstuff have before. He understood the basic concepts, the assumptions, the things considered too elementary to be explained.

He was able, therefore, to make comprehensible the Indian concept of characters that are, at the same time, both human and animal. He was able to interpret the thought behind the original tales into a book-length narrative, the sophistication of which is only lightly disguised by the superficially naive, actually artful style.

The characters of the story, with the exception of a few such as the Flint People and the Grass People, are animals, somewhat as Kenneth Grahame's Rat, Mole, Toad and Badger are animals, but in another, very Indian way. Very few writers can bring off this trick without becoming cute or ridiculous; but it is done beautifully here. I imagine children will love the result; I am quite sure that adults will delight in it.

The setting — California before ever white man came to despoil it — is beautifully handled. The author knew profoundly and at first hand the ethnology and old ways of his people; he also knew how to subordinate his erudition to the requirements of good writing. "Indian Tales" may well become a classic.

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"DEATH OF A SALESMAN"

By Vane C. Dalton

ALFREDO Gomez de la Vega, who last appeared before our public some five years ago in a masterly interpretation of the leading figure in Rodolfo Usigli's celebrated play "El Gesticulador," has returned to our footlights, at the Palacio de Bellas Artes, enacting the role of Willy Loman in Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" ("La Muerte de un Viajante"). This dramatic event, as one would readily expect, drew forth an enthusiastic response among that reduced contingent of theatre-goers in our midst who still appreciate the art of drama at its finest, and especially among those who still retain an admiration for the unique personality of Gomez de la Vega.

The return of Gomez de la Vega to our footlights is in itself a highly dramatic event, for though our public has been privileged during the past twenty-five years to enjoy this superb performer's talent but on rare occasions, and after prolonged intervals, he has indisputably preserved on our stage the eminent position not only as our most accomplished actor and director but also as the sponsor of the finest in world's contemporary dramatic art, as a stalwart and somewhat solitary leader in the nascent trend of our theatre.

The local presentation of Arthur Miller's great play defines the realization of a personal aim Gomez de la Vega has fervently pursued during the past several years, as well as the crowning artistic success of his long and brilliant career. He became fascinated by this play when he saw it in New York and subsequently in London, and the wish to produce it in Mexico and to enact the role of Willy Loman became paramount in his mind. An accomplished writer, a linguist, and a man of universal culture, Gomez de la Vega made the Spanish translation of this play, faithfully preserving the flavour of its dialogue and its full dramatic essence, and with the author's approval of this translation set out to arrange its production. The only stage, however, upon which it could be adequately presented was that of the Palacio de Bellas Artes, and he had to wait over a year before it became available.

The presentation of "Death of a Salesman" in Mexico, introducing Arthur Miller's genial work and defining a personal triumph of Alfredo Gomez de la Vega, bears an additional multiple significance. The Mexican public, by and large, appreciates the technological eminence of the United States: it acknowledges the superiority of American automobiles, cash registers and television sets; but it is largely uninformed, and to an extent even indifferent, regarding its achievement in arts. And this lack of awareness or interest is, obviously, a serious want. Hence, to acquaint the Mexican audience with a great play by one of America's most distinguished contemporary authors is of undeniable cultural importance: it is a very effective means of promoting in this country a sound appreciation of North America's values which extend beyond technology or purely material advantages and comforts.

Despite its typically American theme, in its broad human substance "Death of a Salesman" unwinds a story whose scope surpasses geographical boundaries. Though stemming from conditions peculiar to the civilization in North America, the tragedy of Willy Loman can be easily grasped by the average Mexican mind. It is the final frustration of a man whose sole practical asset was that of being "simpatico," whose entire life rested on a myth, who had formed a cog in a machine that wore itself out in the grind and became useless. It is the tragedy of the average "little man" who fails



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to achieve a real, a fruitful and rewarding life because the nature of his task and means of livelihood are based on unreality. Traveling salesmen are not as common in Mexico as they are in the United States, but Willy Loman, under the name of Juan Fulano, is a readily recognizable person. Here he is the glib and "simpatico" fellow who squanders away his life as a hanger-on in politics, or as a minor bureaucrat, eternally hoping that he might secure the right kind of "pull," as a "coyote," fixer or factotum, or indeed as a traveling salesman—a little man clinging to a dream, buying his bits of lottery tickets, assured that some day he'll hit the big prize.

Arthur Miller's story is not very far removed from Mexican reality. The unavailing, self-sacrificing devotion of the mother, the incapacity of a father to endow his sons with a heritage of either wealth, preparation, or living values, and the consequent incapacity of the sons to find a place for themselves in the world or a meaning in life, all this, so often characterizing the precarious and frustrated existence of our lower middle classes, comes so close to mirroring certain aspects of life in this city that it requires no great effort of imagination for a Mexican audience to comprehend and deeply feel the implicit message of this play.

But the total merit of this work is defined by the author's treatment of the theme as much as by the theme itself, by the magnificent vehicle Arthur Miller created in the telling of his story. As an example of modern technical perfection, "Death of a Salesman" provides a truly extraordinary experience for our audience and a source of invaluable guidance for our own native playwrights. Realistic social arraignment being as it is the main preoccupation of our outstanding dramatic authors, they can find precisely the kind of help they need in this play by Arthur Miller. Here is a human document presented in terms of stark reality, a tragedy of social maladjustment—a personal tragedy for which society at large is morally responsible—the tragedy of a man "on the road," for a rootless, placeless human being who clung to a dream, who sought to find a place and roots, to achieve integrity, to maintain his dignity, a man who potted in his little garden which never flourished. Yes; Mexico, in its perpetual



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state of social flux, is full of little Willy Lomans, and of Biffs and Happys who don't know where they are going, and of Uncle Bens who have vanished chasing rainbows in the sierras.

These, I suppose, are the things Alfredo Gomez de la Vega felt when he brought Willy Loman to life before our audience. For to employ the usual encomiastical adjectives would hardly describe his performance. What he actually achieved in the realization of a personal illusion is a work of art and a work of love.

And observing the performance of the supporting cast—of Virginia Manzano in the role of Linda, or Alberto Mariscal in that of Biff, of Antonio Carbajal in that of Happy, of José Elias Moreno in that of Charley, of Alvaro Matute as Uncle Ben, and of Tana Lynn, Cuca Dublán, Emma Grissé, Violeta Guirola, Alberto Pedret and Manuel de la Vega in less salient roles—one perceives how deeply Gomez de la Vega, as director, has imbued them with the comprehension of and sympathy for the characters they portray, how splendidly he achieved a perfectly coordinated and homogeneous presentation of a play that for its sheer greatness could indeed be justified by nothing less than this.

"Death of a Salesman" has brought a new breath of life to our stage; it lends a mighty impulse to the slow though essentially vital progress of dramatic art in Mexico.



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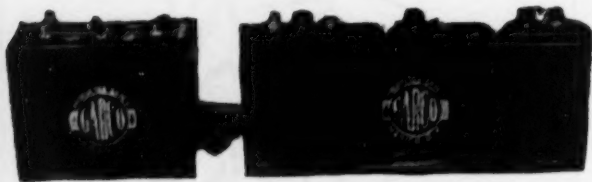
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Art and Personal Notes

TRINIDAD OSORIO, a young and gifted Mexican painter, is being introduced to the local public in a one-man exhibit at the Galeria Arte Contemporaneo (Calle de Amberes No. 12). Pupil of Alfredo Zalce, Julio Castellanos, Rodriguez Luna and Chavez Morado at the San Carlos Academy, Osorio reveals a well assimilated influence of these able teachers, as well as a clearly defined note of self-assertion.

ALARGE and very impressive collection of landscapes in oil by the distinguished Spanish painter Vives Atsará is currently on exhibit at the new Velazquez Gallery (Avenida de Independencia No. 68).

FLOWERS OF MEXICO, an exposition of water colors by Helen O'Gorman, is open to the public at the Sala de Estampa of the Palacio de Bellas Artes. This exhibit is highly interesting artistically as well as scientifically, for the artist has achieved in her paintings a minute exactness of Mexico's fascinating plant life in the style of 19th century botanical prints.

The artist, who is the wife of the noted muralist Juan O'Gorman, plans to publish these water colors in book form, which will comprise a study on flowering plants of Mexico, including their scientific and common names, where they may be found, when they bloom, and their uses, ornamental and medicinal, by the Mexican people.

Mrs. O'Gorman, who is a graduate in Fine Arts and Architecture from the University of Washington, initiated her artistic career in sculpture. Pupil of the famous sculptor Alexander Archipenko, she began exhibiting her work in 1935 at such important centers as the Los Angeles Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, and at the New York World's Fair.

CITIES OF CANADA, a collection of fifty paintings by outstanding Canadian artists, gathered by the House of Seagram, was shown during the final week

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of last month in the Salon de los Candiles of the Hotel del Prado.

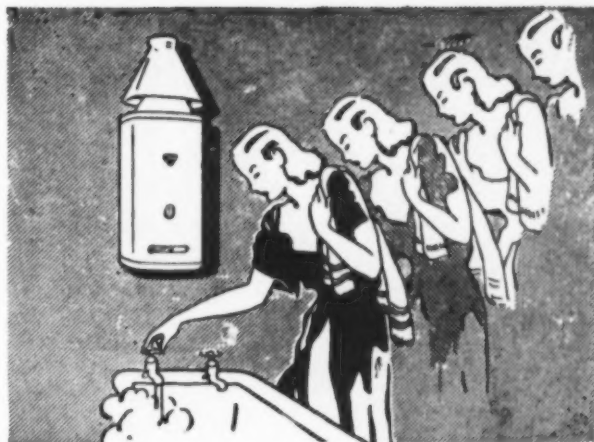
After the local showing, the collection, which has already been presented in Canada, Puerto Rico and Cuba, will continue on its tour to Caracas, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires, Montevideo, London, Paris, Rome, Geneva, Stockholm and Madrid.

The collection and its tour were made possible through the House of Seagram, which made available 500,000 dollars to encourage Canadian artists who were chosen by the Royal Academy of Canada to paint views of leading Canadian cities. International good will is the purpose pursued by the sponsors.

PORTRAITS in oil by Philip Schuyler, a North American artist, were shown in the course of May at the Mexican-North American Cultural Institute (Avenida Yucatan No. 63).

PRINTS by outstanding members of La Sociedad Mexicana de Grabadores make up the current exhibit at the Salon de la Plastica Mexicana (Calle de Puebla No. 154). The following artists are represented in this quite interesting show: Carlos Aivarado Lang, Abelardo Avila, Luis Beltrán, Celia Calderón, Pedro Castelar, Erasto Cortés Juárez, Francisco Díaz de León, Manuel Echauri, Gabriel Fernandez Ledesma, Angeles Garduño, Alfredo Guati Rojo, Manuel Herrera Cartalla, José Julio Rodríguez, Amador Lugo, Feliciano Peña, Paulina Trejo, Francisco Vázquez and Angel Zamarripa.

THE Arte Moderno Gallery (Calle de Roma No. 21) is presenting at this time in its ground floor salon a group of newer paintings by Mariano Paredes. Portraits by various 19th century Mexican artists are being shown on the upper floor.



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A QUITE interesting collection of drawings by the local artist Jorge Tovar is being shown during this month by the Guadalupe Posada Gallery (Corner Dr. Vertiz and Dr. Liceaga).

FOLLOWING the exhibit of prints by contemporary Swedish artists, the Prisse Galleries (Calle de Londres No. 163) are presenting a group of semi-abstract compositions by Francisco Gonzalez.

PAINTINGS in tempera by Fernando Castro Pacheco, as well as a collection of works by outstanding contemporary Mexican artists, are being offered during this month by the Galeria de la Plastica Mexicana (Calle de Puebla No. 154).

AN EXPOSITION of works by teachers and students of the Fine Arts School of the Mexico City College was given during the course of the past month at the Saloneito Galleries (Calle de Jalapa No. 147).

MARINO VERGARA OCHOA, a self-taught painter of considerable talent, is exhibiting at the Circulo de Bellas Artes Gallery (Calle de Lisboa No. 48) forty and some odd paintings in oil and water color, depicting the countryside and native types of the State of Veracruz.

Editorial Note: The Article "City with a Secret," by Angelica Mendoza, which appears in this issue, has been reprinted from AMERICAS, monthly magazine published by the Pan American Union in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

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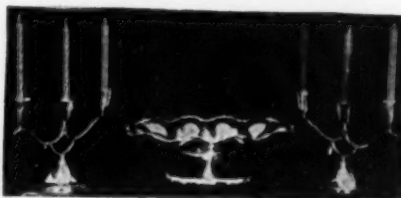
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Patterns of an Old City

Continued from page 16

,moreover, never known an artist in her life, and he was an authentic artist, a painter as well as an author, writing a book in Mexico and illustrating it with his own drawings.

She had never before received a man alone in her house, but she felt that she was doing no wrong in permitting him, on his casual request, to stop in for tea on the following day.

* * *

In the American colony tongues began to wag during the ensuing weeks, and then there was the full blast of scandal. It was shocking, amazing, incredible that a woman who had always seemed quite respectable and sane would abandon a fine home, an excellent husband and a child of seven, to run off with a rank adventurer, an irresponsible Bohemian, a man who would most assuredly lead her to ruin. It was sheer madness, deliberate self-destruction, to say nothing of the wanton cruelty to her blameless husband and child.

She did not leave a note; she merely instructed the servants to look after Roger until her husband arrived from the mine. But even before he arrived she was aboard a ship bound from Veraacruz for Europe. It was a case of reason yielding completely to pure emotion, of a mind that totally capitulated to the dictates of the heart. She loved Bertram with a devouring passion, with an overwhelming self-obliterating force. She could not, nor did she even try, to comprehend her action. She could not fathom what the future might hold in store. She only knew that she could not live without him.



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They went to Spain and settled in a little fishing village on the island of Mallorca, where Bertram finished his Mexican book. Time was devoid of tangible quality; her personal life was erased in an all-consuming devotion. She was the slave, the shadow, the echo of a man who was for ever the living, the life-sustaining part of her being, who was entirely her own, and who was yet always remote at the core, always mysterious, never fully attainable. She was the mistress of a whimsical, unstable and temperamental artist who loved her deeply yet fitfully, who knowing that he would be lost without her, secretly resented this knowledge and was always torn between his bondage and an urge to retain his free will.

They roved through North Africa, stayed for a while in Sicily, then definitely settled in Florence. Bertram was working on a new book, as a part-time occupation, devoting most of his energies to serious painting. Lacking business acumen, he eventually came to rely entirely on her ability to manage their affairs, which was sufficiently sound to keep them fairly solvent. She took care of his business with his publisher and with his New York dealer, and even found an outlet in Italy for some of his work. Life was not easy; it was always devoid of a final sense of stability or home; but then his presence was in itself the only home she needed.

They came to America at the outset of the war, and after a tour of exhibitions located in San Francisco, the city of his birth. And even if now at last they seemed to be permanently settled, it was not till after many years of living in this city that she acquired a sense of truly belonging there, of actually hav-

ing a home. Though her life was yet entirely submerged in his and she never questioned its completeness, occasionally she had vague yearnings for something sadly wanting, and then the image of the little boy she left in Mexico brought hidden longings, brought secret queries and regrets.

To this extent, she was guilty of only one disloyalty. Through some of her surviving relatives in Louisville, with whom she re-established correspondence after a long hiatus, she learned that Leslie died in an accident at the mine some fifteen years after she left him, and that Roger, upon completing his course at the American School in Mexico City, was continuing his studies at a college in the 'States. In the following years, when the world was again at war, her secret longings became overcast with fear, for she learned that he had enlisted in the forces and went overseas. Thus, indirectly, through an occasional casual line in a letter, she never completely lost trace of her son.

She was past seventy when Bertram died after a long and wasting illness, and the world suddenly became totally empty and shorn of meaning or purpose. It seemed strange to her that she could live on at all without Bertram, that her life could continue in its stark desolation, and the thought that she too would die very soon became fixed in her mind. And it was not because she was striving to rid herself of this thought but because she accepted it tranquilly that the desire to see her son grew into a desperate craving. She had not heard of him in quite a long time, for the source of her knowledge by then was also extinguished, but she did know that he had returned to Mexico after the war and was living there.

* * *

The afternoon was waning; twilight was gathering under the trees. Another day, she thought. I have

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wasted another day. Sharply her mind emerged from the haze of remembrance. I am putting it off because I am afraid to face it, because I am afraid that he will reject me, cast me away, that the life-long resentment, even probably hate, he has harbored so long cannot be obliterated, that he can never forgive my deed. So I am deliberately wasting the little time I have left, wasting it tramping about the streets, looking for vanished houses, sitting here in this bench, as if there was actually a remotest chance of meeting him this way. But I must stop this temporizing, must stop it now. I will do what I had intended to do at the outset. I will go to the Consulate. Go there tomorrow. They ought to know. They will tell me.

* * *

Roger's rancho, they told her, was some twenty kilometers south of Cuernavaca, and so far as they knew he lived alone on the place and earned his living by farming. She would have no trouble in finding it, they assured her, for it was just off the main highway.

She was oblivious of the dazzling blue sky and the grandiose scenery along her journey from Mexico City, and did not attempt to recapture her memory of Cuernavaca as the car traversed its crowded sloping streets. And now at last, after the final endless miles, she came to the end of her journey. The car stopped near a low stone hedge and an open arched gateway. There was a smooth green lawn and a flagstone path to a house not far away, a neat white house with a red-tiled roof and a wide terrace, and she knew that that was the place.

She walked through the gate, and with each faltering footstep the past and the present seemed to conspire against her. She walked as if in a delirium, each step a desperate effort to keep from falling. Her eyes were fixed on the door. And even as she stared at it and her vision became misty with tears, she saw it open slowly and he came out. Her heart leaped in her breast, and blindly her hands reached into space. And then, through the watery blur, she saw him again, saw a tall lean sunburnt man pacing slowly across the terrace and pausing on the stairs, inspecting her thoughtfully.

And as she stood there, powerless to take another step, it seemed strange to her that he was a grown man and not a little boy shouting gleefully and running and jumping to meet her.

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An Old Street in Cuyatlán

Continued from page 22

imaginable quality. A guest at the wedding had brought a large sack of coffee beans as a present. This took care of everything except the utter social necessity of having at least one servant. Even this was arranged by having an old retainer of the family come each day. She was much too decrepid to do any work, but lay on the floor for three hours each morning nursing her lumbago, while Alvaro and Concha cheerfully did what was necessary.

In those days a very few pesos bought what was, from a two-legged gastronomical standpoint, an exceedingly formidable stock of corn. Before this was exhausted a terrific piece of good fortune came along, elevating the Guzmán scale of living for months to come. Concha sold an old silk rebozo to the Americana up the street for forty pesos. This meant good brown beans along with the tortillas, replenishment of the supply of candles and sugar, repair of shoes, and perhaps a fifty centavo ticket in the National Lottery. It was not possible to budget much of anything in the way of vegetables or fruit, but about this time the cactus pears ripened on all the neighboring hills, and the inhabitants of the town were able to go on a prolonged fruit jamboree, for free. Recreation remained unchanged, consisting of the religious activities and festivals, the parading around the plaza when the band played, and the endless visiting with friends. Occasionally Alvaro wangled a visit to the cock-fights at Ramos, a small town down the valley supported entirely by that diversion. Concha had to stay home, but probably some extra religious devotions were indicated on those particular days.

Thus life went on with the Guzmáns. Perhaps a little later Alvaro was hired for a few weeks to manage the camp and transportation of an American engineering party; perhaps Uncle Plutarco suddenly decided to send them a few pesos a month. On the other hand, if the artistry of an unhappy ending is desired, it might be assumed that Alvaro's lottery ticket paid off to the tune of five thousand pesos. That, naturally was the end of the sparse but healthful diet, the brisk walking, the moderation in general. Instead, enormous highly seasoned meals with six or seven meat courses each, much tequila and brandy without soda, much riding in hired carriages over the tecth-shattering cobbles. Even the flow of conversation was stimulated and subject to further excesses.

Before the five thousand pesos was all gone Alvaro died of what was probably cirrhosis of the liver, although solemnly diagnosed as rheumatic fever by Dr.



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Galván. Concha went back to her family, who received her with sincere affection and whose regular meals soon cured her of incipient obesity. The house in Cuayatlán reverted to Uncle Plutarco. It seemed that he had a mortgage on it all the time although, to do him justice, he never would have foreclosed it had Alvaro continued to live on nothing a year.

Nurse Marta

Continued from page 10

macy. Now suddenly she was poised, selfassured. She seemed to put on five years.

"Good morning, Señora Rojas, Señora Martínez. Que tal? Today," she announced briskly, "I am ready to vaccinate the children against diphtheria. Friends, who will give a table and chairs?"

In a moment she was the center of a ring of apprehensive children and excited mothers. They watched with fascinated eyes as she drew needles, cotton, alcohol from her bag and arranged them on the contributed kitchen table. Older women, who ordinarily look down upon an unwed, childless girl, treated Marta as if she were a sister. One by one the children were laid across a mother's knee while the nurse deftly wielded the needle, the women followed her lead in soothing the younger children and teasing the older ones to shame.

"And why do you cry, Chucho?" Marta laughed. "Is not a boy of eight already a man?"

A storm broke out over the luckless Chucho's head. "A dove, that one!"

"His skin tender as a girl's. He fears the needle will scar it."

The mother bent down urgently: "Do not disgrace us, my son!"

Marta took me to the village of Acapatzingo. With us came an older nurse and a doctor. The work here was broader than in the more frequently visited city slums. Files were to be brought up to date, children weighed and measured, adults interrogated and advised. Yesterday the sanitation experts were here. Tomorrow would come the social worker.

The brigade of three carried a bathroom scale, sulfa drugs, hypodermics, throat pallettes, lancets, slides for malaria blood tests. At the slum dwelling where they first stopped almost everyone seemed to be suffering from some ailment. There were blood-shot eyes, running sores, and emaciated bodies.

Dr. Luís González Piñón sat at the table taking down vital statistics and directing his nurses. He too seemed young, but he had worked two years among

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the Indians of Colima, often spending twenty hours a day on horseback. This heavy field work is now required of medical students. Hardly more than a decade ago Mexico's medical graduate had not seen a patient outside the illustrations in his textbooks.

Like Marta, Dr. Piñón is no robot. In Mexico you cannot be a good nurse or doctor without sympathy and compassion. I saw the pain in his eyes when a wrinkled old woman, sobbing in terrible grief, brought him a blue-lipped baby. She sat beside him cradling the limp bundle in her rebozo. "My little grandson, my beautiful one. Aie, mi nietecito! Mi queridito!" she moaned.

"Why didn't you bring him to the clinic?" Dr. Piñón cried.

The old woman shook her head, and her neighbors explained that she had been waiting for a certain medicine man from somewhere "up in the hills."

Dr. Piñón made a rapid examination. "Pneumonia," he muttered. "The baby is dying."

He wrote something on a piece of paper which he thrust into the woman's hand. "It would take too long to call the ambulance. Your feet are quick?"

"Sí, sí!" Hope flickered in her eyes.

"Then carry him quickly to the Health Center. Give them the paper. They will take care of you."

As she sped down the road, Marta turned from the look on his face. "It is useless, I'm afraid," he said. "Too late. But to do nothing is in itself like dying."

Among the children was a little girl with matted hair and dirt-smeared face who stood apart, spoke to no one, and seemed poised for instant flight. Marta appeared not to notice her, but I heard her put a low-voiced question.

"Oh, that one," said the women. "She is an orphan. She has only just come, from far away, to live here with Señora García, her aunt. She is a wild one. The Señora can do nothing with Dolores."

Marta skilfully cornered the child. "Niña mía," she said softly. "You are so pretty. Do you know this? But others cannot see how pretty you are because you are so dirty..."

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The girl broke away and left Marta kneeling awkwardly on the stone-tiled porch, talking to the air. But when we left, Dolores was vigorously scrubbing her face at the broken water pipe.

* * *

The old village of Acapatzingo was once off the beaten track. Now it is almost a suburb of Cuernavaca. At the houses near the main road, the health brigade was warmly received. But beyond the plaza, dominated by the ancient Spanish church, it was a different story. The nurses walked up and down the dirt lanes, knocking at doors which would not open although dark eyes stared at them from behind the barred windows. After half an hour they managed to gather a small group of children and a few mothers, obviously of fairly well-to-do families. The youngsters were smiling and expectant. They were no strangers to the needle.

"It is through these that we hope to get the others," Marta said as she lined up the children. "But it is so slow. And if the baby dies, the one brought by the old woman, much good work may be undone."

The Health Center does not fight the curandero. It concentrates on winning the trust of the people. About once a month Dr. Piñon shows films and gives a lecture in front of the old church. Experts from the Department of Agriculture show the farmers how to change still-water to running-water irrigation on their rice fields in order to cut down malaria. Social worker Berta Horta bribes her way into their homes with gifts of soap and baby clothes.

"But slums remain slums," said Dr. Eliodoro Celis, director of the Health Center. "That is beyond our province. It is a problem in social engineering. In spite of this limitation, we have made progress." He pulled out his charts. In the eight-year period they covered, infant mortality had dropped from 161 per thousand born alive to 127. General mortality had fallen from 31.49 percent per thousand to 27.11.

"It isn't good enough," he said, "but it is enough to bring more people to us. They don't read the charts

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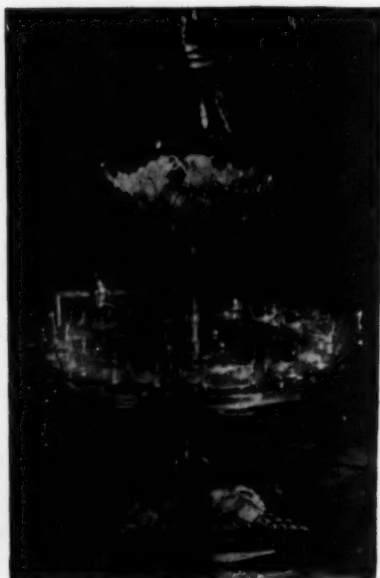
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Marta says: "When I was a child, I used to follow the nurses through the streets. They were so white, so pure. I knew their work must be wonderful. And do you know, everything I thought was true. It makes you feel good to do good."

She may talk like a schoolgirl, but I think I know her now. It is one thing to have a romantic vision of nun-like dedication. But when the vision persists through three years of routine school training and two more years of drudgery in a hospital, it is no longer an adolescent's daydream.

Marta, however, is two persons. An unsure girl out of uniform, she becomes a woman when she dons her whites. But the girl Marta is not yet ready for the woman. She is studying English, typing and shorthand because among her friends this is the fashionable thing to do. She is thinking of enrolling for two years of specialized study in obstetrics because this is the popular next step among her sister nurses.

At the same time, she dreams of another kind of white dress, with train, veil and bouquet. An organ plays, candles burn, and outside the church door a host of people, everyone she has ever pricked with a needle, smiles and whispers, "Our Marta is the most beautiful bride in the state of Morelos."

México's Natural Resources

Continued from page 20

colonial aristocracy. During the nineteenth century, another decline resulted from the competition of importations, particularly during the Diaz period when European goods became high fashion and native crafts were scorned as worthlessly primitive.

But with the 1910-20 Revolution, when Mexico came to discover itself as a nation with unique origins, a fresh appreciation of folk art was born and nourished. A great handicraft exhibition in Mexico City in 1922, and Education Minister Jose Vasconcelos' emphasis on art of the people in the Obregon administration's pioneering educational program, helped raise the neglected folk arts to a high place



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in the developing national culture. The result has been the delight of every tourist, but the program has meant more to Mexico as a necessary outlet for self-expression than as a source of dollar-and-cents income.

A catalogue of Mexican folk art would far exceed space limits here: blown glass, textiles, leather goods, featherwork, pottery, furniture, jewelry of gold and silver and precious and semi-precious stones, metal ware as varied as the mining industry, fiber goods, lacquered objects, and so on through an array that helps fill many a guidebook. Production of toys is a mechanized industry, as well as a popular handicraft, with Mexico both exporting and importing such items. All these original Indian arts and crafts have been modified by Spanish, Chinese, inter-tribe, and various modern influences, to produce—at its best—a unique and essentially Mexican fusion.

* * *

With the tourist and export demand for Mexican handicrafts healthy again, the question arises: What can folk art mean to Mexico economically? The answer is rather disappointing. To produce enough handicraft at attractive prices for economic importance to the country, the worker must turn to the machine, be grouped in a factory, and submit to the regime of reproduced design, interchangeable parts, and other techniques of mass production. And the product then ceases to be handicraft, much less art.

The handicraft skill, moreover, is not easily adaptable to machine industry; in fact, it appears to be a positive psychological handicap to such adaptation. Home shops and village mills thus are a limited source of skilled labor for Mexican industry.

Finally, commercialization already has seriously deteriorated the output of many famed handicraft centers in Mexico. Much of the best work now goes to shops and wholesalers in Mexico City and a few other major urban centers. Higher retail prices there have returned little more profit to the handicraft artisans, who have not yet learned to value labor as highly as raw materials in the cost of their products. Meanwhile, the pressure of demand has impaired the skill and pleasure of creative work. Catering to the

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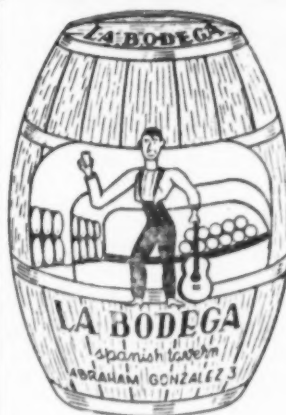


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poor taste of many North American tourists, let it be admitted, also has damaged the crafts with garish, non-Mexican designs.

Throughout Mexico, notably in the large and fascinating Oaxaca market, excellent and cheap native crafts are still to be found by the buyer who knows what he is doing, though price-haggling is less the rule than formerly. But it is almost axiomatic that as handicraft centers become increasingly popular with tourists, the quality deteriorates and the price increases. There are exceptions, at least in regard to quality, such as the silver shops of Taxco, where producers have wisely sought to enforce minimum standards.

As commercialization almost inevitably must destroy the real worth of the folk arts and the result could not be more than a minor economic asset—the wiser course for Mexico would be to intensify the effort to maintain those arts and crafts as the free expression of a gifted people, and look elsewhere for mass exports. However, Mexican folk art has survived the impact of distracting influences for centuries, and perhaps may withstand the latest threat of commercialization.

Ride to the North Star

Continued from page 12

ment; but Eunice couldn't think of going away without it, and thought we should save it for Bill Sheffler. We asked how much the bird would be, and after quite a family discussion, she rather inquired if two pesos would be too much.

Considering the fact that the girl had found the egg in a wild nest, set it under a hen, and raised it to maturity, we thought the price reasonable. We drank some more coffee, and sat, enjoying the companionship of this mountain family.

I complimented the coffee; and they explained that it was gathered, wild, from trees that had been

planted a few kilometers away by a German many years ago. His venture had failed; but the coffee bushes had thrived in the mountain soil. Now they had all the coffee they wanted, for the picking. We bought ten kilos of the raw beans, as it was much better than we could get at the stores in Alamos.

Our vaquero had been looking around the garden, and came back with a suggestion. He said he knew we would want a great deal of the fruit, and he would like to buy some for his own family and friends in the village. If he could start back early, he was willing to load his horse with our coffee and fruit, plus whatever he wanted to buy; and walk back. We knew the trail, and did not mind going back alone—in fact, we rather looked forward to the idea; but



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we protested his walking. Then he confessed that he could sell the fruit he bought at a profit, to his friends, and thus get double pay for his day's work. This was satisfactory to us; so we all went out into the gardens, to get him loaded. The children, their shyness completely forgotten, set to gathering tomatoes, mangoes and papayas. We were disappointed that the bananas were still small and green.

Soon our companion was loaded, and on his way; and we could look about us at the great spring that flowed out of the hillside above us, and the careful terracing that this family had accomplished to make a mountain slope into a fertile garden. Patches of chilis and potatoes were growing well, and the corn was almost in the roasting-ear stage; while the corn in the valley, below, was just coming up.

We could not help thinking how much richer the lives of all the people in the district would be if they could harness the summer water, and irrigate crops.

It began to look pretty stormy in the southeast; so we saddled up and said good-by to our hosts. They were waving and calling "Adios—que vayan con Dios," as far as we could see and hear them.

The journey home became a flower-collecting trip for Eunice. She was soon loaded down with a giant bouquet that would have been the envy of any movie queen. I carried the chachalaca in front of me; and she carried the flowers. We made quite a procession.

As we came down out of the last meadow into the canyon below, my horse snorted and came to a sudden stop. There, in the middle of the trail, was the largest Gila monster I had ever seen. I couldn't pass it up; as I was making a collection of reptiles for the American Museum of Natural History. I gave the chachalaca to Eunice, who somehow managed to get it and her flowers arranged so she could see past them. Then I tied my horse.

The Gila monster was slightly over thirty inches long; by actual measurement—as mean-looking a reptile as I ever saw. His ugly black head was almost as large as my hand. He lay there, motionless in the trail, watching us with his beady eyes. I could see why this Mexican species was called "Horridus."

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These reptiles are slow and rather clumsy. He was easily caught, but once I got my hand round his thick neck, he wasn't easy to handle. I couldn't put him in my collecting sack, as he could readily bite through it and get either the horse or myself. I had to carry him all the way home. It was quite a trick to get back on that horse, one-handed. The horse, definitely, did not take to Gila monsters.

I finally made it, and we started down the trail at a pretty good clip. It was just as well, for the sky was black now and the thunder was an almost continuous roar. The rest of the trip was a race against the rain, and a constant struggle on my part to hold onto the horse and the Gila monster, which insisted on rubbing my arm raw with his horny tail.

We came into the ranch-house gate just as the first big drops began to spatter. Stiff and tired from holding onto our unusual loads, we both had to be helped from our horses, to the accompaniment of considerable laughter. I guess we must have presented a pretty funny appearance; but we didn't mind.

At the Plaza de Toros

Continued from page 15

How can they go on torturing the animal? Why don't they kill him quickly?"

I hoped they wouldn't have to jab firecrackers into the bull's rump to get him out of his "querencia." But finally he tossed his head at the challenge of three capes and dashed back out into the open. The third banderillero placed his shafts, and the second act of the drama was over.

Now came the last act, when the bull and the matador faced each other alone. It is called euphemistically "the moment of truth." The odds are overwhelmingly in favor of the man, though many a matador in the past has been gored and killed in the very last minute of the fight.

Before he went out for the finish, the matador paused in front of us to speak to one of his assistants. He did not look at all like the confident hero who is to conquer. He was sweating profusely, and great damp areas had appeared under his armpits. There



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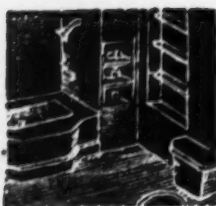
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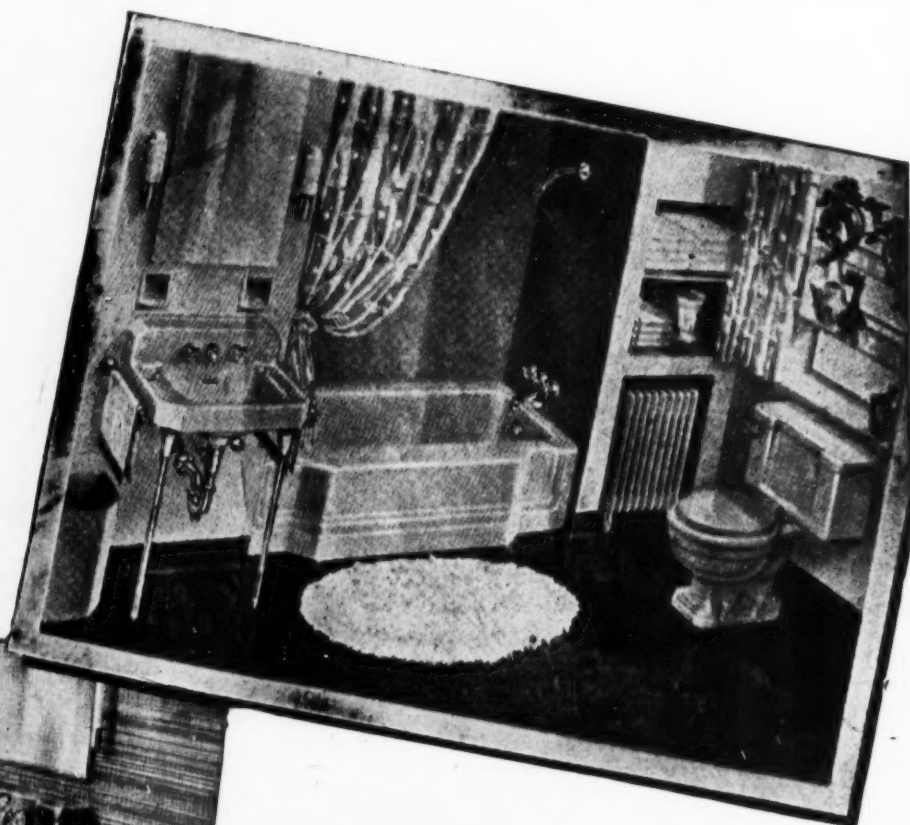
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was a dark scowl of uncertainty on his face as he was ceremoniously handed his muleta and the sword.

"That red piece of serge on the stick is called the muleta," Señor Casasús said to the Englishwoman. "With it the matador controls the bull, gets him into position for the kill."

But the bull would not be controlled. Though the fierceness had gone out of him, he was not hypnotized by the movement of the red serge, as he should have been according to the rules, and he would not get his front feet close together or his head properly lowered.

The crowd began shouting criticisms and advice, as bettors do at football games when they are about to lose their bets. Finally the matador dubiously made the attempt and lunged. The sword went in no more than eight inches. The bull jerked his head up and tossed the sword into the air. It fell behind him. Completely disarmed, the matador now stood at the bull's mercy as two banderilleros, waving their capes, appeared like guardian angels. One banderillero dashed out with an extra sword and handed it to the humiliated matador, who aimed again and struck. He missed a vulnerable spot, but retrieved his sword. He made five more attempts, wounding the bull and drawing more blood, but not hitting a vital spot. Casasús and the little Mexican stood up and yelled recriminations. At last the bull, bleeding profusely like a many-spouted fountain, trotted meekly back to his "querencia" just in front of us. His force was gone. He had no desire to charge, he wanted only to escape from the bedevilment and ease his wounds. But he still had enough strength left to run his horn into a man's inwards and kill his tormentor.

The matador now had to come our way again, to the hissing of the crowd. There was a confused desperation in the man's expression—a paralyzing fear of failure. The muttering hostility of the crowd was like his hearing the death warrant of his career. As the first cushion hurtled through the air from the seats above, the man stood for a moment, blue lips drawn tight, his body trembling. This was his own little personal tragedy, and in his prosaic way he may have been feeling a little of what Othello felt when he began to murmur the valediction to his career, end-

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ing on the moving line, "Othello's occupation's gone." Perhaps he was only thinking, "No more contracts, and how can I feed my family?"

Thérèse was softly crying. I felt it. And as the cushions began to land like thudding insults on the sand, I knew pity for the man's humiliation moved her—as well as the torture of the bull. She, who had rather the bull had killed a man than that men should torture a bull, was now on the side of the man against the hooting crowd.

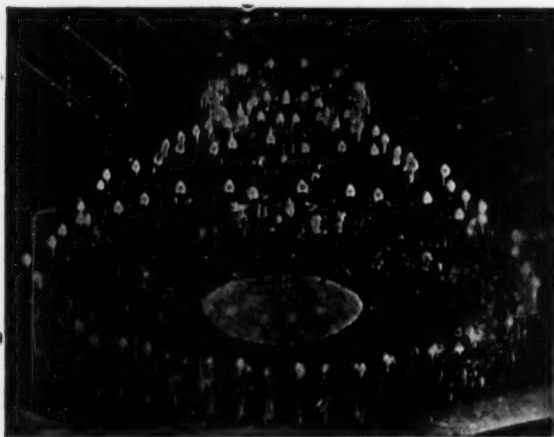
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Toots was furious at both bull and man. "Manso, manso," she kept repeating contemptuously. "I told you from the first he was 'manso.' The bull was certainly tame now; as the blood flowed, his spirit ebbed with it.

"How can they," Thérèse cried out in anger, "expect the bull to fight when he can hardly stand!" It was true. The beast was heaving mightily, and white ropes of saliva were dangling from his open mouth, through which he was struggling for enough breath to keep from falling. "Why, he is literally dying there before our eyes!"

The two utterly defeated, the man and the bull, were close together now—seemingly in strange partnership. The man, holding the mortal weapon, looked as though he would not greatly care if the beast should pierce his own heart with the long curved horn. The bravery which he had lacked and yet had made an effort to simulate was now born out of desperation. He had only a few seconds left of allotted time to finish the job. If he failed now, the bull would be driven outside to be slaughtered, and the man be completely disgraced. He walked directly toward the horns, attempting no skillful use of his muleta. The heaving bull, looking as if he had learned at last what was expected of him, docilely lowered his head, like an actor in a tragedy welcoming a dagger thrust. The matador sank the sword to the hilt between vertebrae and shoulder blades and stepped back—not in triumph, but in sour indifference. He watched the beast drop to its knees and pause there for a moment, the bull's eyes widening with the taste of death that came with a rush of blood out through the gaping mouth. Then the eyes snapped shut and the beast toppled over on his side. The gore made a crimson-lacquered platter for his black head to rest upon while his carcass stretched stiffly on the damask of the sand.

Amid hisses and boos, the white-faced matador, unscathed in body but lacerated in spirit, took one last



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When I turned to Thérèse I knew I had to take her home. She looked utterly stricken. She was trembling, and I saw she was trying to control herself to prevent her crying out her indignation at her fellow human beings.

Señor Casasús, not dreaming of her anger at us in the box too, but sensing her distress, turned to her and said very gently, "Are you suffering too much, madame?" He kissed her hand to show his sympathy.

I was grateful for his solicitude and so was she; for it dissolved her indignation into a sort of resigned compassion, and saved her from telling us what she thought of us and the world in general. She was able now to make her apologies properly and leave quietly.

"I thought," she said, struggling to restrain the tears, "perhaps it might not be so dreadful. But it's so very much worse than I ever dreamed."

"I'm sorry your first bullfight had to be such a flop," said Señora Casasús. "It was really about as bad as I ever saw, and I've seen hundreds." She smiled understandingly and sweetly at Thérèse; for she had seen other women and other men who could not take it. "That man was an absolute idiot. No courage, and no style at all."

"Poor man," Thérèse said, "he looked as miserable as the bull." I asked the Englishwoman if she would like to come too. She glanced towards Milstein hesitantly and then said: "No, I think I might stay on. You see, I keep my eyes closed most of the time."

Señor Casasús came with us to find a taxi. Thérèse insisted that I return. "We can't hurt our host's feelings too much," she said. "I'll be all right in a little while."

I thought she wanted to be alone for a bit, and I said, "I'll stay for a couple more and then I'll make my excuses."

Señor Casasús stopped a taxi cruising by. I said "Hotel Reforma" to the driver. Thérèse thanked Señor Casasús again for his hospitality, and said she was sorry to have been a nuisance. She appreciated his solicitude. When the car drove off we returned to our

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seats just as the second bull—a reddish one this time—charged into the arena.

"Now that bull I believe has 'sentido,' Toots said. 'You will see he is no manso, he has intelligence, and he is full of fight. You will see.'"

"And that matador is very, very beautiful," the Englishwoman said, more to cheer herself up than to give expression to any enthusiasm.

The young bullfighter was considerably taller than the average. He was slim, as a torero should be, with very narrow hips and splendid shoulders. He looked to be in his early twenties. The crowd took to him at once, for he moved with as much assurance as grace. When he came our way to speak to an attendant, we could see that he was strikingly handsome, with a profile and neck for sculpture. In any costume he might have created admiration, but in his bullfighting suit he cut quite a figure. His backer must have sunk several thousand pesos in it. It was of coral-colored silk, the fabric patterned subtly in rectangular lozenges with silver threads, so that a silvery blush like that on Malaga grapes moved over the surface of the pink stuff as the man walked. And he walked lithely, like a puma; but there was no suggestion of arrogance in his demeanor, and one of the angel-faced innocence of that youthful fighter named Rivera whom I had once met. As the torero turned his head to glance at someone in the stands above us, he reminded me of Jim Burt, a friend from Opelika, Alabama, who had been a groomsman at our wedding, and who in his law-school days was considered the handsomest young man in the state. In my mind I began calling the fellow Jim, and during the fight I would say, "Bravo Jim!" and "Look out, for God's sake, Jim!"

For some moments the torero watched the bull being played by the banderilleros with their capes. He watched intently, appraising the beast's temper and reactions. Then he himself ran forward a little toward the bull, and stopped and profiled as the bull charged the cape. With great deftness he made a lovely and exciting "veronica." Then, pivoting on the balls of his feet, he passed the bull out of the cape and faced him for the next charge. Now he brought the bull so close to his body that it looked as though the horns were caressing the man's indrawn narrow waist when the beast flashed by. The crowd cheered lustily as the torero walked calmly away with his back to the bull, like a man who bears a charmed life.

"What a wrist! Oh, what a wrist he has!" Toots said in ecstasy.

"There's magic in that wrist," Milstein said, unconsciously glancing at his own that wielded the bow.


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In his next moves the torero swung the cape still lower and lower with measured grace, and the horns and the flanks of the enraged bull brushed him, as if to whisk away the dust the charge had stirred up from the sand.

It was exciting, and it was beautiful—a symphony in rhythm and grace and skill and bravery. The crowd gasped in fear and admiration. All of us in the box except the Englishwoman became vocative. She kept her dignity, though her eyes were wide-staring with the wonder of it all. I regretted much that Thérèse could not have seen this part, and then nothing else.

All the following episodes of this fight were infinitely better than those of the first one. The picadors were more skillful. They did not wound the bull too deeply. The animal tired himself trying vainly to sink his long sharp horns into the mattress and to lift the horse.

The banderilleros performed well, and the humps of muscles on the bull's neck would rise with his fury each time they approached him. The matador himself tried his hand at placing the last pair of banderillas. It was thrilling to see him court death and defy it in the same movement. His leap to safety was a thing of such grace and lightness that I thought of Nijinsky in his prime. The crowd cheered lustily. Here and there a corsage began to drop from the stand onto the sandy edges of the arena.

The matador stood for a moment in the center of the ring, smiling with visible pleasure. "I told you," Señor Casasús said leaning forward, "sometimes the novilleros put on the finest shows of all. They have not been gored yet, and they take wilder chances."

"He jests at scars that never felt a wound," the Englishwoman beside him murmured vaguely.

"This fellow will make a great fighter," Toots

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said enthusiastically in my ear. "He is "muy hombre."

"If he lives," said the little Mexican from behind. "If he lives!"

The excitement became intense with the third act, when the bareheaded matador and the bull faced each other for the last bout. Doubtless some of the force had gone from the bull, but he had lost none of his spirit or his rage. He stood there painting, his legs apart, his shoulders bristling with banderillas and his eyes baleful with vengeance.

"It will be difficult," Toots said tensely, straining forward. "The bull has not been weakened enough. The fellow doesn't seem to know what he is up against."

As the matador began moving forward slowly on his flat shoes, like a dancer, Milstein abserved whimsically, "He holds that heartshaped piece of serge as if it were a valentine for Ferdinand."

"Watch his left hand," Casasús said to the Englishwoman. "You know it is a good left hand that really defeats the bull. He plays him and controls him with that left hand holding the muleta. The sword in the right only gives the death stroke."

Suddenly my heart stopped beating. There was a rush like a whirlwind in the arena, and for a moment the man and beast were as one—or the man at the center of a wheel. In the pass with the muleta he turned completely in a circle and let the scarlet serge wind about his body just beside the bull's horns, with the bull whirling round after the loose end of the cloth. Toots screamed, and clutched my arm.

"My God, what a molinete!" gasped the little Mexican.

I felt cold perspiration on my forehead, and then a mighty pounding in my chest as my heart started beating again. This time the matador backed away, unwinding the muleta as he moved. "What the hell, Jim!" I said weakly. "What the hell!"

"The man will be killed!" said Milstein, his face white now, and strained.

In the pause before the matador made really for the finish, in the silence of the breating spell, the Englishwoman said quietly: "Why does he do it? Why does the young man, so handsomely equipped for living, deliberately face imminent violent death?"

I did not wait for the local experts to reply. I said quickly: "A bullfighter loves the thrill of tempting death and conquering it. One torero told a friend of mine that there was no passion yet conceived to compare with its satisfaction."

"Perhaps," said Milstein in a hushed voice, "that is the reason some say bullfighters make unsatisfactory lovers, that their sweethearts are often jealous of their profession."

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"Quite so. A woman may perceive that she can never give a torero by moonlight what he gets here in the glare of afternoon."

Toots looked at me in surprise at my observation, as Casasús said "Now!" in a loud whisper.

The matador had profiled, and his whole manner had changed. There was no smile, no bravura. He was ready for serious business, for the solemnity that is supposed to go with "the moment of truth." He stood poised for a moment with his muleta low in his left hand and crossed in front of him, his left shoulder toward the bull, the sword in his right hand pointed and held across his body, the tip of the sword dipping slightly down.

"His height is in his favor for the fatal spot," Toots whispered hoarsely as the matador took two backward steps and then started forward on a run. In a flash the streak of silvery coral that was the man was leaning against the bull's head between the horns, the sword sunk to the hilt into the bull's body. The man pressed his body loverlike, and the blade disappeared completely. Then he leaped clear just as the great head chopped upward and the horns slashed at the woundless air.

The crowd caught its breath. The bull staggered, made a frail feint at plunging, sank suddenly to his right front knee, and then dropped on the sand and rolled over dead, his legs ignominiously in the air.

* * *

A mighty tumult was let loose. The crowd was on feet screaming. All of us in the box except Milstein's publicity manager were on our feet, too. The band started playing the Diana feverishly—off key. Men's hats began flying out into the arena like great black and brown birds in panic. They crashed into each other and into tossed bouquets. Thousands of handkerchiefs were being waved with frenzied emphasis, and thousands of pairs of eyes were turned to the official box. The master of ceremonies came to the front of his box and waved an outsized handkerchief in answer to the public's demand. A banderillero rushed out, sliced off an ear of the dead bull, and ran to present it to the young killer. The matador accepted it, bowed his thanks, and made a quick grand tour of the arena, holding the ear up and out for the crowd to see the token of honor. As he passed our box, smiling his thanks, we all beat our palms together in enthusiastic applause, and Casasús and the little Mexican shouted congratulations.

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"There's no public adulation that can touch what a good bullfighter gets," Toots said. She turned back to the Englishwoman. "You wondered why he became a fighter? See!" She made a gesture of indicating the general wild enthusiasm. What could satisfy male vanity beyond this? He is a hero to the public; he makes good money; women will throw themselves at him. What might he have been—a groom? a chauffeur? a shop assistant? a bricklayer? perhaps a gigolo? Here he dares for sport and for the big rewards."

"Yes, yes, I see. And he is very beautiful."

The bull had been dragged out. The "wise-monkeys" were sweeping the sand smooth to prepare the field for the next exhibition.

With sudden resolution, I stood up. I felt the climax of the afternoon had been reached, that none of the four fights to follow could conceivably surpass this one, that this novillero could hardly equal his own performance. I had seen something brilliant and magnificent in its way—the sort of thing that comes from a mating of natural genius and good luck, as well as from painstaking practice.

I explained how I felt, and reminded them truthfully that we were going to the Villaseñor's house for tea, that they were sending their car for us and I did not want to chance keeping the chauffeur waiting. I said how marvelous the last performance had been and I did not think there could be such excitement in any of the fights to follow.

It turned out I was wrong about no greater excitement, but I was not to know that until some hours later, when Señora Casasús telephoned the news. In his second fight the young novillero we had admired had not had the luck to match his super-bravery. He had had to fight a cowardly bull who was completely unpredictable. In the kill, the bull's horns had ripped the coral-silk thigh to the bone, making a long ugly gash to the groin. The man would doubtless not die, unless gangrene set in; but if he ever fought again he might never do it with the same fearless rapture of the first fight this afternoon.

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